

THE  
SCHOOLMISTRESS  
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FOR  
THE POOR.

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TO THE  
LADIES  
OF THE  
SOCIETY  
FOR  
CHARITABLE PURPOSES.

LADIES,

*THIS Book was written with a very earnest desire, and not without some little hope, of being serviceable to the ignorant, by supposing myself the Mistress of a School for poor Children, whose scholars ha a just read a chapter or an history in the Old Testament, then relating the beads of what they had read, and endeavouring to inform them of the practical duties to be drawn from those lessons.*

*The Author, Ladies, who claims not the honour of being known to any one of your Society, but who hath heard, with an heart-felt joy, of the blessings which your noble and well-con-*

## DEDICATION.

*ducted institution hath conveyed to thousands, begs leave to acknowledge, with gratitude, that it is owing to your examples this Performance had birth; for although, Ladies, in in your pecuniary contributions you have followed the steps of those whose distinguished humanity reflects so much lustre on this nation, yet your charity of time (from a collective body composed of women of the highest rank and abilities) is a path struck out by yourselves.*

*No emolument being intended to the Author, the Book is sold at two shillings sewed, and at two shillings and sixpence plain bound.*

*I am, Ladies,*

*with the highest respect of your virtues,*

*Your most obedient*

*and very humble servant,*

**THE AUTHOR.**

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LESSON I.

YOU are not only taught, in the first chapter of Genesis, that God made the heavens and the earth, but that he made every living creature, and every thing that grows; that he made man in his own image, and gave him dominion over all that he had made.--The meaning of dominion is power, charge, or care; and therefore it is plainly our duty to be careful, merciful, and good, to whatever creatures we have in our power: we must be mindful never to torment or be cruel to any thing that has life, for they all feel pain as well as we do; we must remember that God made the least creature that

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creeps upon the earth, and that his eye is always upon us, to mark how we treat his creatures.---Children have dogs, cats, birds, and many other living things, in their power, which, for want of knowing better, they daily torment, and are cruel to; but when they are told that God is displeased with all cruelty, and that he loves and blesses the tender-hearted and the good, and that he is always close by them, and sees every thing that they do, I trust that they will never be cruel any more.---The use we are to make of our dominion or power over every thing that grows is to be careful never to make any waste.---Children that trample down the corn, tie it cross the pathway, or pull up turnips, and many other things which they can get at, are guilty of great waste; ---but after they have been told that God forbids every kind of waste, and that he sees whatever they do, I hope they will never be guilty of it again. When you are old enough, perhaps you may be servants, and then, by taking care never to waste the least bit of bread, meat, or any other thing that is in your power, you will be the means

of helping your poor neighbours; for whatever is saved in a family by a servant's care, that might have been wasted by their neglect or idleness, I look upon to be partly their charity; for no master or mistress will give away the less, in any respect, for what their servant saves; and therefore the poor will be great gainers by such care.----Pray, my dear Children! remember that God sees and knows every thing that you either do, or think, or say: if you keep this always in your thoughts, it will keep you from all sin and wickedness.

## LESSON II.

WHAT most concerns you to mind in the second chapter of Genesis you are taught in the Fourth Commandment, which is, as well as the other nine, as plain, I think, as words can be.---I hope, my dear Children! that you will, to your lives' end, keep holy the Sabbath-day; for all those poor unhappy wretches who come to the gallows desire young people to take warning by their unhappy fate, saying, that their first step to wickedness

edness was breaking the Sabbath-day.---- I beg that you would always go to church, and, when there, mind nothing but your duty ;---stand up, and kneel down, when the rest of the congregation do ; and never repeat any thing after the minister but what the Prayer-book tells you to say; for many people, thro' ignorance, repeat those words which are ordered to be said only by the minister.---Fetch the Prayer-book, and I will shew you what I mean.---This prayer, beginning--"Almighty and most merciful Father," is called *The Confession*;---read it carefully to the end, for whoever does that must understand every word of it.---You see that in this prayer all the congregation join in confessing, or acknowledging, to God the many offences or transgressions that they have been guilty of; that they humbly beg of him, for the sake of Jesus Christ, to have mercy upon them;---and if their hearts go with their words, if they indeed feel as sorry as they say they do, God will pardon them: for Jesus Christ, who loves us ten thousand times more than our fathers or mothers can possibly do, is (as you are taught in the

Belief) sitting at the right hand of God, and always asking him to pardon our transgressions for his sake ;---to give us grace to amend our lives for his sake ;---to bless and preserve us from all danger for his sake ;---and when we die, to take us to heaven for ever and ever for his sake.---How shall we render thanks to God for giving us such a blessed friend as Jesus Christ ? for we may be as sure as that we are now alive, that whatever Jesus Christ asks for us of God, it will be given unto us. We cannot, my dear Children ! give him such thanks as he deserves, but we will give him all that is in our power ;---we will remember to keep holy his Sabbath-day ;---we will keep his commandments ;---and we will do what our duty towards God (which we learn in the Catechism) teaches us.---This prayer, beginning---“ Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” is called *The Absolution* ;---read every word of it carefully, and then you must plainly see that God does, for the sake of Jesus Christ, pardon all those who are truly sorry for having offended him ; and this pardon he has commanded

the priest to declare and pronounce to the congregation. To this you must listen with the greatest attention and the greatest thankfulness, but you must not repeat one word after him.

Pray, my Children, think of my words when you are in the church, and then you will not behave improperly.

### LESSON III.

You must learn, from the third chapter of Genesis, never to listen to those people who try to make you break any one of God's commandments. You have just now read how angry God was with Adam and Eve for committing the like offence, and this came by listening to an ill adviser. Remember, my dear Children ! that all bad advisers are set on by the devil ; it was the devil that caused the serpent to tempt or deceive Eve, and it is the devil who puts bad men, women, and children, upon trying to tempt or deceive us ; but children who have learnt the Ten Commandments, who say their prayers every night and morning, and never

forget that God's eye is upon them, are not easily deceived. Suppose, when you was going to church, some one should ask you to go another way, saying, "We shall never be found out, for no body sees us," you would directly say, "Yes, God sees us, for his eye is always upon us, let us go where we will." As the devil put this ill adviser upon tempting you not to go to church, most likely he will make him laugh at you, hoping to get his ends that way; but children that are wise in their duty to God scorn to be laughed into any thing that is wrong. Another, perhaps, will tempt you to take something which is not your own, saying, "There is no harm in taking such a little matter;" but you will soon let them know that they cannot deceive you, for you will tell them that the Eighth Commandment says--*Thou shalt not steal.*--Thus you see, my dear Children! what a blessing it is to know your duty to your Creator in the days of your youth; it will keep you from all evil while you are upon earth, and carry you to God Almighty whenever you die.

LESSON IV.

You have just read, my dear Children! in the fourth chapter of Genesis, of that horrid deed which Cain committed in killing his brother ;---and what do you think made him do this wicked thing ?---It was envy: ---he thought that God Almighty loved his brother Abel better than he did him;---and I believe he thought right: for when Abel made his offering unto God, (which was the same in those days as your saying your prayers is in these) he minded what he was about, and never forgot that God's eye was upon him.---But if Cain wanted God to love him, and to respect, that is, to be as well pleased with his offering as he was with his brother's, why did he not try to be as good as his brother? God Almighty makes no favourites; he loves those the best who strive the most to please him ; and if we all do every thing in our power to please him, he will most surely love us all alike.---But I guess that Cain was lazy, and whoever is that way given, will never be pleasing to

God nor man: whatever he went about he did it unwillingly, and that was the reason why he never did it well. His countenance was so surly and so cross, that if he could have hid his thoughts from God, (and that we all know that he could not) his looks would have told that he did his duty unwillingly; and duty so performed, whether to our God or to our master, will never make us be loved. Remember, my dear Children! never to be lazy; for it is only the lazy who envy. When you hear another praised, rejoice at their good name, and tell them you are striving to get up to them as fast as you can.----Last week a little boy that I know brought me his writing to look at; it was very well done, and I told him that I thought no boy of his age could write better.----"Yes, but they can," says he; "there is a boy in the school, who is "a year younger than I am, that writes bet- "ter, and when I come to see you again, I "will bring you one of his copies; but he "thinks that I shall soon overtake him, be- "cause I try by myself when I am at home."----I had often heard that every body loved

this boy, which made me ask his mother to let him come to see me ; and when I heard with what pleasure he praised his school-fellow, and that he was working hard to be as good a boy himself, I did not wonder in the least that every body loved him ; and I heartily hope that every child in my school will deserve to be loved as well.

### LESSON V.

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OU have read, in the fifth chapter of Genesis, that Enoch walked with God ;--- which means, that he was a very good man ; ---and that he was not, for God took him ; ---that is, God took him up to heaven while living, so that Enoch never died.---- You should observe that Enoch was taken from this world much younger than the rest of his brethren, which should teach you never to say, (as some idle people are apt to do when any young person dies) that their being cut off in the flower of their youth was a judgment from God.---- Here the wickedest of us must own that it was not, and the good never harbour any such wrong

thoughts.----The son of Enoch, Methuselah, lived longer than ever any other man did, and there is no reason why we should think otherwise than that he was a very good man. We may be certain that his father took great care to teach him his duty; and I believe that there never was a child that honoured and obeyed righteous parents but what turned out very well.--Thus you see, that either dying young, or living to be old, instead of a judgment, may be a blessing from God.----I know that the Almighty hath said, that the wicked shall not live out half their days; and this, like all that God hath said, is true; for either their crimes send them to the gallows, or their vices carry them to an untimely grave.--But from deaths like these, my Children! all are secure who remember that God's eye is upon them, who keep his commandments, and who never profane his holy Sabbath.

## LESSON VI.

FROM the beginning of the sixth to the end of the tenth chapter of Genesis you have

read an account of the flood....I hope, my dear Children! you observed, that however angry God may be with the wicked, he never forgets to take care of the good....You must likewise remember the behaviour of Noah and his family; for though they saw every creature drowned, (except those that were in the ark) and the water which had been their death still rising higher, they were not in the least afraid; for they well knew that God was by their side, and therefore no harm could happen to them....I desire you would not forget that the Almighty promised never to destroy the world again by a flood; that he set his bow in the cloud as a token of the covenant, or promise, which he made between himself and the earth; and that this all-merciful promise was not only made to man, but to every thing that has life....And if God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and of earth,---if he regards, with tenderness and care, the life of even the least of his creatures,----shall we, to whom he gave, from the first of the creation, dominion over all that he had made, (which you know I have

told you means a charge to take care of, and be kind to) exercise cruelty to any thing that has life? Surely no ;---we will endeavour to be faithful stewards to our charge; we will say to our hearts, Not a sparrow falls to the ground but our heavenly Father knoweth it ; and it is he who hath clothed the grafs of the field.---Remember this, my Children, so long as you live ; and then you will never trample down, in sport, that which the Lord causeth to grow, nor take pastime in tormenting what he delighteth to make happy.

## LESSON VII.

You have read, in the eleventh chapter of Genesis, an account of the building of the Tower of Babel, and that the people's design in building it was to make themselves a name : but this proud design, like all other pride, was very displeasing to God ; and therefore all the pains they had taken, and all the vain empty hopes they had conceived, were frustrated by him in one moment.---Had they been good, and remem-

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bered their Creator, he would have given them a name that they might with innocence have been proud of; that name which he has given to all who fear and love him; and that the greatest, wisest, best of men glory to be known by,---Children of God, and, Inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.--- Will you not, my dear Children! do every thing in your power to deserve this name? I am sure I will do all that is in mine to teach you; I will endeavour to train up my Children in the way that they should go; and will pray to the Almighty to give them his grace, that they may continue in his paths to their lives' end.

## LESSON VIII.

FROM the beginning of the twelfth chapter of Genesis to the end of the seventeenth you have read an account of Abraham (according to the command of God) leaving Haran, and settling in the land of Canaan, which God promised to give to his descendants, and from thence called *The Promised Land*.---I hope you took notice of the good

example which Abraham hath set us to live in peace and friendship with our brethren; for tho' Lot was his nephew, and therefore ought to have given way to him, Abraham, in the kindest manner, desires that they may not dispute...“ Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, for we are brethren: take thy choice; if thou wilt go to the left hand, I will take the right; or if thou chusest the right, I will take the left.”... This shews us, my Children, how praise-worthy it is to live peaceably and in friendship both with our kinsfolks and whoever we dwell with; and if we mind to follow the good example of Abraham, it will be as easy as it is right. If your brothers, sisters, or fellow-servants, should think their way of doing any thing better than your's; provided it is innocent, do it: if they are older than yourself, it is likely that they may know better; and if younger, you should set them a good example, and shew them how foolish and how wrong it is to be obstinate. By always remembering this rule, you will make every body love you; and instead of contending with you, they will:

do all in their power to make you happy, because they will see that it is your desire to make them so.

## LESSON IX.

THE eighteenth chapter of Genesis instructs us in a duty that we are called upon, almost hourly, to practise,---our duty to our neighbour.---When Abraham was informed by the Almighty of his intention to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, it filled his breast with concern, and called forth all his compassion. Though he knew how wicked they were, he was too good to reflect upon them, and say, as bad people often do, that it was no more than they deserved; but he did all in his power to save them, hoping, no doubt, that they would repent of their crimes, and thereby escape the heavy judgment. As he greatly wished, so he was led to hope, that there might be some good people amongst them who did not deserve so dreadful a punishment; and as he knew that in the midst of judgment God always remembered mercy, to his mercy he petitioned.

ed....“ Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou not spare the place for the righteous that are therein?”---And when the Almighty promised to spare it if fifty righteous were found, Abraham, still earnest in a duty so near his heart, with the greatest humility, and the warmest affection, continued his petition.---“ Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes; Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous?--If there should be but forty?--If but thirty?--If but twenty?--If but ten?”---To all which the Almighty attended, and promised to spare the cities if ten righteous should be found.---Can there be any thing plainer than that the love of our neighbour is highly pleasing to our God?---Suppose either of your mothers were sick, and she had not a child old enough to nurse her, should you not be glad that your neighbours would give her what assistance lay in their power? It is not all who have money to give, but every one who hath health, and is not lazy, can spare a little time to help a sick neighbour.---Should

any be in trouble, we must endeavour to speak comfort to them, and listen with patience to their complaining: it is a great consolation to the afflicted to see that they are not forsaken; and though it cannot remove, yet to many it abates their sorrows to relate them.---When you can read tolerably well, offer to teach any of your young neighbours who cannot; tell them, that if it had not been for the goodness of your parents, or the goodness of some charitable person, who put you to school, you should not have known how to read any more than they.---Thus you must do in every thing that you know which another does not; teach them in the best manner that you are able, and be happy that it is in your power to assist them.

This, my dear Children! is your duty to your neighbour; this is loving him as yourselves, and doing to all as you would they should do unto you.

#### LESSON X.

FROM the beginning of the nineteenth chapter of Genesis to the end of the twen-

ty-first you have read an account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which the wickedness of their inhabitants drew upon themselves; and you may be very sure that all crimes will, one time or other, be punished by the Almighty, without they are truly repented of, and committed no more.----I hope you observed the tender care which the Almighty took of Lot and his family ; for though the offences of the people had kindled his wrath, he shewed mercy to the few who had obeyed him, before he executed judgment on the wicked. To be sure you took notice that Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt ; and I hope you remarked that this punishment was for breaking a command of God's ; for his angel had forbid Lot and his family to look behind them.

You must be very thankful, my dear Children ! that you are so early taught the commandments of God, and you must daily pray unto him to give you his grace, that you may continue to keep them unto your lives' end.

## LESSON XI.

WE must learn, from the twenty-second chapter of Genesis, my Children, that whatever troubles or sorrows we may labour under, provided that we do not bring them upon ourselves through wickedness; God will, and that when we least expect, deliver us from them all. It may please the Almighty to send them as trials of our obedience to his will, and of our trust in his mercy to deliver us; and we cannot have an higher example of both than is given us, in this chapter, of Abraham. We read that God did tempt, that is, try, Abraham, saying, "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt-offering unto me."---Here mark, my Children, Abraham's behaviour under the severest trial. Not a single complaint did he utter, not a tear fell from his eye. When God gave him his son, he received him with gratitude; when he demanded him again, he delivered him with unspeakable obedience. That voice which he had raised to

Heaven to spare the cities was now bound  
in the stillness of resignation. His good heart  
melted with compassion at his neighbours'  
afflictions, and he prayed to the Almighty  
to deliver them; but to his own he pati-  
ently submitted; God had commanded, and  
his commands were never grievous. He  
therefore prepared an altar, and bound his  
son for the sacrifice; he had taken the knife,  
and stretched forth his hand to slay him,  
when the angel of the Lord prevented the  
stroke, and instantly changed the heaviest  
affliction into the highest bliss that it was  
possible for his heart to know: his son was  
given back to life, and his obedience crown-  
ed with a promise, that in his seed all the  
nations of the earth should be blessed. This  
promise was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus  
Christ, whose mother (the Virgin Mary) was  
descended from Abraham.... You must un-  
derstand, my Children, that we are to re-  
gard the Virgin Mary only as the means or  
way by which it pleased the Almighty to  
send his Son upon earth; but it is to God,  
and only God, that we are to give thanks  
for this unspeakable blessing. Had it been

right to render thanks to the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ would have taught us to have done so; for he hath in the plainest manner taught us every thing that is the will of God for us to perform. The birth of Jesus Christ was a miracle; the meaning of which is, something performed by God that cannot be explained by man; as, for instance, the Almighty's having made this world out of nothing is a miracle; no man can tell how it was performed, yet every one knows that it was done.---Isaac is called a type of Jesus Christ; the meaning of a type is, one thing's representing or being like another; as a picture, you know, represents or is like the person for whom it is drawn. Thus Isaac strongly represented Jesus Christ: for Isaac was a promised son, and his birth was a miracle;---Jesus Christ was the promised Messiah, and his birth was a miracle;---Isaac was his father's only son;---Jesus Christ is his Father's only son;---Isaac carried the wood on which he was to be sacrificed;---and we read, in the nineteenth chapter of St. John, ver. 17. that Jesus Christ bore the cross on which he was to be sacrificed;---on the third

day Isaac was delivered from death;---and on the third day Jesus Christ rose from the dead.---This, I hope, will make you understand what is meant by Isaac's being called a Type of Jesus Christ.

You must remember, my dear Children! that your godfathers and godmothers, at your baptisms, promised, in your names, that you should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your lives.---Now you may depend upon it, that whatever is his holy will,---whatever his commands may be, those who patiently obey, like Abraham, will, like him, be delivered from their troubles, and crowned with blessings, by their Father which is in heaven.

## LESSON XII.

From the beginning of the thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis to the end of the fiftieth you have read the history of Joseph, the youngest son but one of Jacob, (whose name, you know, was changed to Israel) grandson of Isaac, and great-grandson of Abraham.---

I hope you minded, throughout the whole, the goodness of Joseph's heart.---In every thing that he did, it is plain he remembered God's eye was upon him ; and in his greatest distresses he never despaired, because he knew the Almighty was by his side .---His history sets before you a dutiful son, a kind brother, and a faithful servant :---it shews you a bright example of forgiveneſſ ; for notwithstanding the exceeding cruelty with which his brethren had treated him, he never once upbraided them, but found an excuse for their behaviour when they had nothing but shame to offer.---“ Be not “ grieved, nor angry withyourselves, that “ ye fold me hither, for God did ſend me “ before you to preserve life.”---He was both too wife and too good to throw away one moment upon anger ; he was earnest to make himself happy, by making all who belonged to him ſo.---“ Hafte ye to “ my father, and ſay unto him,---Thus “ faith thy ſon Joseph,---God hath made “ me lord of all Egypt; come down unto “ me, and I will nouriſh thee and thy house. “ hold, for there are yet five years of fa-

“ mine.”---I beg, my dear Children! that you would observe how generously, gladly, and with all his heart, Joseph assisted his distressed brethren: he did not say the famine would last so long that it was likely he and his children might want bread themselves, and that charity must begin at home; but he knew that his brethren then wanted it, that it was his duty to assist them, and that whoever did their duty, the Almighty always provided for in the day of need.---Joseph’s kindness to his brethren, my Children, brings to my mind the behaviour of a poor good man, whom I formerly knew, who only rented a little farm: ---this man had two brothers, the one a very great drunkard, who ran away from his debts, and left three small children without bread;---the other went abroad, and, after having saved a pretty deal of money, returned to England. When he went to see the farmer, he asked him if he had done tolerably in his absence?---“ Purely,” replied the farmer; “ I bless God, both myself and “ children have brave health.”---“ Health!” said his brother, “ I mean, have you thriven?

“ have you saved any money?”---“ Yes,” he replied ; “ for God hath prospered me all my life.”---“ Very well,” said his brother, “ this is good hearing ; and as I understand making more of money than you do, let me have what you have got, and “ I will turn it to a good account.”---The farmer fetched what he had, and told him that was all.--“ All!” said his brother, “ why, “ I thought you said you had prospered !” ---“ And so, Brother!” he replied, “ I think “ I have ; for I have brought up seven children, and put out a little matter to interest “ for them and theirs, and saved what you “ see against a wet day.”--“ Oh!” replied his brother, “ if you have money out at use, it “ is very well ; what may be the sum ? and “ have you taken care to place it safely?” ---“ Why, Brother !” he replied “ to deal “ plainly with you, the little matter at interest is what I have done for our brother’s poor children : you did not like to “ look upon them, because you was angry “ with their father ; and though your not “ helping them has often troubled me, I “ knew that I had no right to make you ;

“ but I was master of my own, and what  
“ I have done with my own I do not re-  
“ pent of.”---This answer made his brother  
very angry, and he never would see him  
more. As his heart was set upon his money,  
he did not care to make a will, there be-  
ing something in that like parting with it ;  
he therefore died without one, and his two  
offending brothers, the one for being good,  
and the other for being bad, equally shared  
what he left. The drunkard very soon died,  
and his money was divided between his  
three children. Their good uncle continued  
his care of them ; he paid their father’s  
debts, and put them out to trades ; one a  
Bricklayer, one a Carpenter, and one a  
Blacksmith, and before he died had the hap-  
piness of seeing them all masters for them-  
selves.---Soon after the death of this good  
man, his daughter, who was married, and  
had six children, died of a fever, and her  
husband died three days after her.---Every  
body was sorry for her poor children, and  
an old neighbour of their father’s meeting  
the bricklayer, told him he was heartily  
concerned for the death of his kinsfolks ;

that he could not think what would become of their family, for there was no knowing what to do with six fatherless children.----

“Indeed,” replied the bricklayer, “but there is ;----their grandfather taught my brothers and me what to do with fatherless children, and I thank God we have not forgot: it is settled that each shall take two, and I make no doubt but we shall be enabled to provide for them.”

I charge you, my dearest Children ! never to forget this story, but often think of the poor good man, who opened his heart, and cast his bread upon the waters; and behold his grandchildren, who, if he had been living, would have been his little darlings, finding it after many days.

### LESSON XIII.

#### DIVIDED INTO PARTS.

THE books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, my Children, contain the whole history of Moses; therefore I shall relate the heads of what you have read,

in order to make you understand more clearly whenever you read it again.

You must remember that Israel and his children were (by Pharaoh's order) placed in the land of Goshen, the most plentiful part of all Egypt; and that this was the noble reward of a great and good master to a faithful and diligent servant; for Pharaoh was so generously kind to Israel wholly upon Joseph's account.

In this happy situation the Israelites continued some years, increasing and multiplying exceedingly.... After the death of Pharaoh, the king who succeeded him, thinking it unsafe to have so great a body of strangers in his kingdom, (lest, in time of war, they should join with the enemy) endeavoured, by severe usage, to reduce them.... To accomplish this he set taskmasters over the Israelites, who made their lives bitter with hard bondage, and caused them to serve with rigour.

When Pharaoh perceived that the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied, he gave orders to the Hebrew midwives to put all the male children of the Israelites to

death ; but the midwives, who feared God, would not obey this horrid order, for which the Almighty blessed them.

Pharaoh finding that he was not obeyed by the midwives, commanded his own people to cast the children into the river.

At this time Moses was born, whose mother, for three months, concealed him ; but as that could not last, she put the child into a bulrush ark, and laid him in the flags by the river's brink.---The king's daughter, who came to that place to bathe, seeing the ark, ordered her maid to open it, in which she discovered an harmless baby in tears : she concluded that it was an Hebrew child, and compassionately said she would bring him up at her own expense.---The sister of Moses (who stood near the water, watching the fate of her unhappy little brother) ran to Pharaoh's daughter, and asked if she should fetch an Hebrew nurse ? The princess bid her go---and the girl immediately brought her mother.

You must here, my Children, remark how marvellously the Almighty bringeth good out of evil ; for could any woman feel

deeper woe than to be obliged to deliver up her child to perish ? and yet it was wholly owing to this cruel command that Moses acquired that learning and knowledge which made him capable of conducting the children of Israel out of Egypt. As the son of an Hebrew-man in bondage, he would not have had the education which Pharaoh's daughter gave him, and the great business that he was to perform required all the skill and judgment which man could possess.

When Moses was grown up, he one day saw an Egyptian strike an Hebrew, and in taking his part he slew the Egyptian ; this being told unto Pharaoh, he was very wroth against Moses, who fled into the land of Midian to avoid his anger : here he married the daughter of Reuel, and from that time was the keeper of his father-in-law's flock. ---In this employment Moses was engaged when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the burning bush, informing him that the Almighty had seen the affliction of his people which were in Egypt, and appointing him to be their leader out of bondage.

Though Moses demanded, in the name of the living God, permission of Pharaoh for the children of Israel to depart, he obstinately refused to let them go, which provoked the Almighty to smite the Egyptians with ten different plagues; at length these dreadful calamities softened his heart, and he consented to their departure.

The evening before the children of Israel left Egypt God instituted the Feast of the Passover, so called from the Almighty's passing over or sparing the houses of the Israelites when he destroyed all the first-born of the Egyptians.---From the time that the Israelites began their journey, the Almighty caused a cloud, shaped like an high pillar, always to go before them in the day, and in the night a pillar of fire; this lighted as well as guided them, and, when necessary, enabled them to travel during the night.

They had not been long departed before Pharaoh repented, saying, "Why have we 'let Israel go from serving us?'" He therefore pursued and overtook them near the Red Sea, which made the Israelites sore afraid;---but Moses said unto them, "Fear

ye not ; behold the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew you to-day."---And indeed, my Children, they did see the salvation of the Lord, for he divided the sea, so that the waters were like a wall on their right hand and on their left, and they walked between them on dry ground ; but when Pharaoh and his army followed, the waters returned to their former course, and destroyed them every one.

Notwithstanding this miracle struck the children of Israel both with wonder and gratitude, yet it made no lasting impression on their minds ; in every little difficulty they murmured against Moses for having led them out of Egypt, though they continually saw a miracle wrought for their preservation.----At Marah the bitter waters were sweetened ;---in the wilderness of Sin a miraculous flight of quails were sent them for meat, and it rained bread from heaven, with which bread they were constantly supplied during their journey through the wilderness ;---when they were distressed for water at Rephidim, God commanded Moses to strike the rock in Horeb, and immediately it yielded water.

The Israelites being encamped in the wilderness of Sinai, the Almighty called Moses to the top of the mountain, and, in the awful solemnity of thunder, lightning, an earthquake, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people in the camp trembled, he delivered him two tables of stone, on which were written, with the finger of God, the Ten Commandments; he likewise gave him instructions relating to every other part of the religion of the Israelites, and also of their laws.

This religion, my Children, was then the only true one, and continued to be so till it pleased the Almighty to send his Blessed Son upon earth; but from that time the Christian religion is the only true one, and much easier to practise than that of the Jews, because it doth not require those ceremonies which they were ordered to perform: but the Ten Commandments, and every act of justice, and every act of mercy, that they were commanded to observe, the Christian religion commands our observance of equally.

Sometime after God ordered the Tabernacle to be made, and appointed Aaron and his sons to perform the priests' office.

This must teach you, my Children, always to behave with respect to the ministers of God; and if ever you should be in circumstances to pay tithe, to do it willingly; for both the office and the maintenance of it were ordered by Almighty God.

The rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, I dare say you remember, because the earth opened and swallowed them alive; but you must likewise remember that all discontent is rebellion. Children who are dissatisfied either with their food, raiment, or employment, which their parents judge right for them, are rebellious children.--- Servants who murmur at the just commands, or the just restraints, of their masters or mistresses, and who, instead of promoting good behaviour, stir up others to be dissatisfied, are rebellious servants:----and all who are discontented at doing their duty in that state of life unto which it hath pleased God to call them are rebellious to their Maker.

The Israelites being in want of water while in the desert of Sin, never considered that the Almighty was with them, and how mercifully he had relieved all their distresses, but murmured against Moses, saying, "Wherefore have ye brought us up "out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? "for there is no water; and our soul loath- "eth this light bread."---Here the Almighty was pleased to command Moses to take that rod with which he had performed the former miracles, and speak to the rock, which should immediately afford them wa- ter: but Moses, whose anger was raised by the continual discontent of the people, instead of only speaking, smote the rock twice; and for this act of disobedience, by which he failed to sanctify the Lord in the midst of Israel, fell under his displeasure, and therefore was not permitted to enter the Promised Land.---Though a rock's pro- ducing water, either by a stroke or a word, equally shewed the divine power, yet such was the stupidity and perverseness of the Is- raelites, that the Almighty foreknew a mi- racle repeated would appear less marvel-

lous in their sight than a new one, and therefore was pleased to vary the method, which should produce the same end. Moses had been ordered to *strike* the rock in Horeb, and it should give water; but in Sin he was ordered to *speak* to the rock, and it should give water. Now, can any one say that Moses, by striking the rock in Sin, obeyed God's command?---I know the ignorant would reply, it was the way that God had ordered it to be done before;---but it was the Almighty's will to have the same thing performed a different way,---and therefore Moses, having done it then in the manner that he had done it before, so far from his excuse, was his transgression.

Let this, my Children, be a standing lesson throughout your lives,--whatever commands, whatever directions, you receive, follow them exactly as they are given; the attempting to change them in the least, idly saying that you thought it was best, or that it was the way you used to do, is as much an act of disobedience as the not performing them at all.--Though the manner of the Israelites' complaining when in

want of water was wrong, yet their distress for it was real, and therefore the Almighty relieved them; but their loathing the bread, and murmuring with food in their mouths, kindled his anger, and he sent fiery serpents among them, whose bite destroyed a great number of the Israelites. This punishment brought them to a sense of their guilt; they acknowledged that they had sinned, and besought Moses to entreat the Almighty to remove the serpents; whereupon he prayed unto God, who commanded him to make a serpent of brass, and raise it upon a pole, saying, that whoever was bitten, when he looked on that, should live.

You remember, my Children, that I told you Isaac was a type of Jesus Christ: the brazen serpent was likewise a type of Jesus Christ,----as thus---When the Israelites acknowledged their transgression, (though wounded unto death) by looking up to the serpent, firmly believing that God would perform his promise, they were healed. And the Christian who acknowledgeth and forsaketh his transgression, by looking up with an eye of faith to Jesus Christ on the cross, is saved from eternal death.

When the Israelites pitched in the plains of Moab, Balak (the king of Moab) being greatly alarmed at their conquest of the Amorites, sent messengers to Balaam to come and curse them, promising very great rewards if he complied; but Balaam answered, that if the king would give him his house full of silver and gold, he could not do any thing contrary to the command of God; however, the continued entreaties of Balak might possibly occasion Balaam to secretly wish that his duty had not forbidden him to go; and therefore it might please the Almighty to convince him of his fault, by suffering him to depart with Balak's messengers, and then shewing him that the thing which he desired would have proved his destruction, had not his tender mercy prevented it:—"I had surely slain thee," said the angel of the Lord, "unless thine ass had turned, because thy way is perverse before me."--This opened Balaam's eyes; he confessed that he had sinned, and humbled himself before God.

This must teach you, my Children, never to murmur at those restraints which your

duty lays you under, or to wish that it was not wicked to commit some particular fault which you have an inclination to be guilty of; because this would be serving your Maker only from fear; whereas your duty to God requires that you should love him with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, and with all your strength: you are likewise to put your whole trust in him, which meaneth, that whatever he denieth, or whatever he giveth, you must rest assured that it is done for your happiness.

The reproof which Balaam received for his cruelty to his asfs, shews plainly what I have so frequently told you, that the Almighty is greatly displeased with all those who are guilty of this fault.

While the Israelites were in Moab the Lord spake unto Moses, "Get thee up unto Mount Nebo, which is over-against Jericho, and behold the land of Canaan which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession; and thou shalt die in the mount, and be gathered unto thy people, because you trespassed against me in the wilderness of Sin."

So Moses died in the land of Moab, according to the word of God : “ and there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face ; in all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land.”

### LESSON XIV.

AFTER the death of Moses, Joshua was appointed by God to be the leader of the children of Israel into Canaan.

When they came to Jordan, the waters which parted Jordan from Canaan were miraculously divided, (as at the Red Sea) and the Israelites passed safely through.

As soon as the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal they kept the Passover, and the following day they began to eat of the corn of the land, from which time manna ceased.

God then commanded Joshua to have the ark carried once round the city of Jericho for six days, and on the seventh day,

seven times ; when the Israelites were ordered, upon a particular sound of the trumpet, to give a loud shout, at which the walls of the city fell to the ground, and they immediately took possession.

When the Israelites went against the city of Ai, Achan wickedly took of the accursed thing,---that is, he committed a theft, for he stole a Babylonish garment, some silver, and a wedge of gold.---As he took these things privately, and then buried them under ground, he foolishly thought the theft could not be found out.

Thus the wicked always deceive themselves ; they forget that the Almighty is in every place, and that his eye is upon all they do ; that the “ darkness hideth not from “ him, but the night shineth as the day.”

Some time after, the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and there set up the Tabernacle,

When Joshua had taken the land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses, he gave it for an inheritance unto Israel, according to their divisions by their tribes.

Then Joshua spake unto Israel, saying,

“ Behold, I am going the way of all the earth,  
“ ---and ye know in all your hearts, and in  
“ all your souls, that not one thing hath  
“ failed of all the good things which the  
“ Lord your God spake concerning you.  
“ Be ye therefore very courageous, to keep  
“ and to do all that is written in the book  
“ of the law of Moses; that ye turn not  
“ aside therefrom to the right hand or to  
“ the left, but cleave unto the Lord your  
“ God.”

### LESSON XV.

AFTER the death of Joshua, to the time of Saul's being anointed king, Israel was governed by Judges, and the book which is called by that name contains the history of the Israelites under twelve of them.

You must observe, my Children, when the Israelites did that which was right in the sight of the Lord they prospered; but when they forgot their Maker, the living God, who had brought them out of bondage, who had fought their battles, and delivered their enemies into their hands, then

those calamities befel them which are the certain portion of all who forget their Creator.

You know that the great crime of the Israelites was frequently falling into idolatry, and you likewise know how severely they were punished for so doing; but tho' it is not likely that any of you should fall down and worship a graven image, yet if you neglect to serve God truly, you will be no better than an idolater; for the sin of idolatry lieth in robbing the living God of his due;----that is, of believing in him, of fearing him, of loving him, of worshipping him, of giving him thanks, of trusting in him, and serving him truly to the end of life: now if you neglect to practise these things, do not you rob the living God of his due as much as an idolater doth?

I know you are all acquainted with the name of Samson, because he is called the strongest man; but you must learn from his history, my Children, that the giving yourselves up to any one vice will be sufficient to destroy every good gift which the Almighty can bestow upon man.---All

those abilities which made Samson capable of being Judge over Israel, all that amazing strength which would have enabled his single arm to have laid waste the Philistines, were sacrificed to a vice which rendered him despicable in the eyes of those enemies who before had trembled at his name.

You know, my Children, that the man in the Gospel was reproved for an unprofitable servant who had neglected to make use of his talent; but the man who abuses it is still more guilty, and must expect a far greater punishment. The talents which Samson had received from the Almighty might have proved the deliverance of Israel, and crowned his life with glory, had he not fallen a prey to vice, and blasted his honours in the lap of an harlot. The use you are to make, my dear Children! of the faults of others which either you read or hear of, is to carefully avoid committing them yourselves. Every vice leadeth to destruction, and none more surely than that which Samson was guilty of; for Solomon hath declared, that the company of an infamous woman is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

## LESSON XVI.

**T**H E history of Ruth sets before you, my Children, the great advantage of a virtuous character and a good behaviour.

It may be supposed that Ruth was not the woman which Naomi would have chosen for her daughter, she being an idolatress; but she made so good a wife, and behaved so respectfully to her mother-in-law, that Naomi grew to regard her equally with her son. After Ruth was a widow, Naomi, thinking she would be happier with her own kindred, advised her to return to them; but the kind treatment of this truly good woman had so gained upon the well-disposed heart of Ruth, that she loved her with all the grateful affection of the fondest daughter. She reverenced her virtue, and was convinced that the religion which made so good a woman must be the true one, and therefore determined to embrace it herself. —“Entreat me not to leave thee,” said she, or “to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where

“ thou lodgest I will lodge ; thy people shall  
“ be my people, and thy God shall be my  
“ God.”

Boaz was not obliged by the law of Moses to marry Ruth, he not being her nearest kinsman ; but her virtue was so highly spoken of throughout the city, and her behaviour was so truly praise-worthy, that he made it his choice to marry her.

The fond care which Naomi took of Ruth's child, making her bosom its cradle, sheweth plainly that her affection for her daughter could only end with life.

What Ruth was, my dear Children ! it is in each of your powers to be likewise ;--- your characters may be virtuous, your behaviours may be good ;---these will create you friends while in this world, and make you happy in that which is to come.

### LESSON XVII.

THE history of Samuel, my Children, shews you how great a blessing it is to be born of righteous parents ; for Hannah dedicated her son, in his young days, to

the Lord, and, by so doing, laid a foundation for the good man which Samuel was throughout his life.

All parents, by teaching their children their duty in the days of their youth, may be said to dedicate them to the Lord, and may hope to have them grow up blessings both to themselves and to the world ; but those who neglect to give them every instruction in their power are guilty of a sin for which the Almighty will judge them, and are most likely depriving themselves of good children, who might have proved both the joy and support of their old age; for how can they hope to reap what their conscience tells them they have never sown? --- You must understand that it is every parent's duty to properly correct the faults of their children in the beginning, and therefore must not think them cruel because they endeavour to make you good ; they chastise in love, hoping thereby to save you from ruin. It is a mistaken fondness in those parents who suffer their children to run to destruction, because they have not the heart to punish them: let the fate of Eli be a warn-

ing to all such, who fell under the Almighty's displeasure for not sufficiently correcting his sons;--he did admonish them, but it appeareth that he should have done more.---“I have told him,” saith the Lord, “that I will judge him for the iniquity “which he knoweth, because his sons made “themselves vile, and he restrained them “not.”

Hannah placed her son with Eli the high priest, and his employments were such as were suitable to his years and the profession of Eli; these he discharged with the greatest care and diligence, which made him to be blessed by God, and regarded by his master.---Whatever state of life Samuel had been called to, there is no doubt but he would have performed his duty in it, because his desire was to do always that which was right, and therefore the Almighty would have blessed his endeavours.

It will signify little, my Children, what your places may be called, provided you do your duty in them; for a good servant is sure to be valued by a good master, let his place be what it may. Not long since a lady,

who hath put many children to me, called here one morning, and with her an elderly gentleman, whom I never had seen before.--"Mrs. Brown," said he, "I am come  
" to thank you for having made a very  
" good coachman for me."---"To thank  
" me, Sir!" said I.---"Aye, you," he replied;  
" do not you know William Hayward?"--  
" I did, Sir," I answered, " when a boy; for  
" he came to my school."---"Why, that"  
said he " is the thing;---you made him a  
" good boy, the good boy has made a good  
" man, and for this good man I thank you.  
" Do not imagine I prize him only because  
" he hath never broken my bones, for a  
" very worthless fellow may be an excel-  
" lent driver; but no matter for that, he  
" should not live long with me. Will is an  
" honest, sober, careful servant; he sets a  
" good example in my family, for he minds  
" his duty to God, and that makes him do  
" his duty by me. Will quarrels with no  
" one, and if any disputes arise, he is the  
" peace-maker. Masters have ears and eyes,  
" Mrs. Brown, that their servants know  
" nothing of; by these their secret faults.

“ are discovered, and by these are made known their private good qualities : this is the way that I found out Will to be a peace-maker, and for which, let me tell you, I do not value him a little.”

You may imagine, my Children, how happy it made me to hear so good a character of William Hayward ; but it is much more owing to his mother’s care than mine that he turns out so well ; for I could only teach him his duty, but his mother took care to see that he performed it.

I believe that either as a nurse or chair-woman there are few houses round this neighbourhood that Dame Hayward had not been employed in,---and wherever she had served once, she was sure to be sent for again ; for besides being honest, sober, and cleanly, it was long remarked that whatever she heard or saw, in any of the families she worked in, she was never known to tell it again ; and she used to be called Prudent Dame.

I hope, my dear Children ! you will follow the good examples set you by your parents as faithfully as William Hayward

hath done his; and I pray to the Almighty that they may discharge the duty of parents to you as faithfully as his mother did to him; for though she worked for her daily bread, she gave her son a portion which riches alone could not have bestowed, nor can poverty take away;---she gave him an upright heart, which maketh him to be blessed by his God, and regarded by his master.

## LESSON XVIII.

You know, my Children, I have told you that the book of Judges relates the history of the Israelites whiles under twelve of them; Eli was the thirteenth, and Samuel was the next and last; for by God's command he anointed Saul to be their king, after which the government of Judges ceased.

You must understand, that from the beginning of the world to the time that it pleased the Almighty to deliver the law on Mount Sinai to Moses, it was called *The Patriarchal State*, (Patriarch meaneth the Father or Chief of either a tribe or a nation)

and from that time I hope you all remember that the Israelites were under the direction of Moses, then of Joshua, and from his death, until Saul was anointed, under Judges. All this time the Almighty God was their king; and whenever you hear or read that the government of the Israelites, before they had an earthly monarch, was a Theocracy, it meaneth that God was their king. It was for this reason that Samuel was so greatly displeased at their demanding a king; but the Almighty bade him to hearken unto them, saying, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, " that I should not reign over them."

It is certainly natural, my Children, when we read of this request of the Israelites, to be greatly astonished how a people, chosen by Almighty God for his own, and who had frequently experienced such wonderful marks of his divine power, wisdom, and mercy, should wickedly imagine that they could chuse better for themselves;---and if our reflections on the wrong behaviour of the Israelites teach us to set a careful watch over our own, we, most undoubtedly, make

that use of them which will be approved by the Almighty: it is the use we must make of every fault which we perceive in another ;---but all those who can discern the mote which is in their neighbour's eye, and neglect to remove the beam within their own, are guilty of a crime which will cause them to be hated in this world, and judged in that which is to come.

Saul for some little time obeyed the commands of God delivered to him by Samuel, and so long as he did he was both successful and happy; but when he began to act contrary to those commands, he began to be the most wretched of men.--His sparing Agag, king of the Amalekites, with some of the best of their oxen and their sheep, when he had been expressly commanded to destroy the whole kingdom, and all that it contained, most highly provoked the Almighty, and he informed Saul, by his prophet Samuel, that he had given his kingdom to a neighbour, who was better than himself.

## LESSON XIX.

THE Israelites and the Philistines, my Children, were frequently at war with each other, and when the Israelites obeyed the commands of their Maker they were victorious, but whenever they turned aside from serving the living God, their enemies were (as Joshua had foretold them) scourges in their sides, and thorns in their eyes. You know, in the days of Eli, that Israel fled before the Philistines; that thirty thousand of them were slain; and that the Ark of the Covenant was taken and placed in the house of their abominable idol Dagon. This sight, my Children, must surely have been thorns in their eyes; and when they fled before an enemy who, had they been righteous, the Lord would have delivered into their hands, must it not have been as a scourge in the side of Israel? Well might these horrid tidings prove the death of old Eli! well might his wretched daughter lament, "The glory is departed from Israel, for the Ark of God is taken!"

Under the wise and righteous government of Samuel the Israelites recovered their former losses, and lived in peace for some time; but the many transgressions of their king, (whom they had most wickedly desired) encouraged the Philistines to hope that they might again overcome the Israelites.

The armies being encamped opposite each other, there daily went out from the Philistines a champion of prodigious size and strength, named Goliath, who challenged the Israelites to send forth a man to fight him, and determine the war by that method. The very sight of this giant struck a terror through the army, and no one would venture to engage with him. The three eldest sons of Jesse the Bethlehemite being in the Israelitish army, he sent David, their youngest brother, to the camp with some provision for them, who listening with great attention to all that was related of Goliath, enquired what reward would be given by the King to the man who should kill this Philistine? He was answered, that Saul would enrich him greatly, give him his daughter in marriage, and make the house of his father free in Israel.

It appearing that David was desirous of engaging with Goliath, it was related to the King, who gave orders for David to be brought unto him. Saul then set before him the great danger of engaging with a man so much his superior in strength, and one who had been bred to war from his youth; which David made answer, “ Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, and thy servant slew them both; and this uncircumcised Philistine, who hath defied the armies of the living God, shall be as one of those; for the Lord, who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, will also deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.”

The modesty of David’s reply, joined to his perfect trust in God, whose cause he foolishly engaged in, left Saul but little room for fear; he therefore said unto him, “ Go, and the Lord be with thee.”

David met Goliath with his staff, a sling, and five smooth stones, whom the Philistine, when he drew nigh, disdained great-

ly, saying, “I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the field.” To which David replied, “Thou comest to me with a sword, a spear, and a shield; but I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. He will deliver thee into mine hand, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.”

David then flung a stone, and smote the Philistine in the forehead, so that he fell with his face upon the earth; and he ran unto him, and parted his head from his body, which he immediately carried unto the King.

Though Saul must undoubtedly have been exceedingly happy with the great success of David, yet he was by no means satisfied with the praises which the people bestowed on him; for he possessed that doubly hateful sin that was the destruction of Cain, and will assuredly prove the destruction of all who harbour it. The breast of Saul, instead of being filled with thankfulness to God, and joy for the happiness of his people, sickened with envy, and

very grateful word that was spoken of  
the deliverer of Israel was as a dart struck  
through his liver.

I charge you, my Children, by all the  
love I bear you, never to let envy enter  
our hearts; so far from feeling uneasy  
at any body's being commended for having  
done their duty in their station, you should  
consider it as an encouragement for you to  
do the same in yours; for every good per-  
son hath so much pleasure in giving praise  
where it is deserved, that no one need to  
be afraid of not receiving their just share.  
Whenever you behold another in a situa-  
tion which you think happier than your  
own, always conclude that they were fit-  
ter for it than you; that most likely it re-  
quireth those abilities which you do not  
possess, it being impossible for any one to  
be thoroughly acquainted with all that is  
needful in the situation of another: you be-  
hold indeed the outside, but are strangers  
to many things within; for prudent peo-  
ple do not publish their difficulties, but  
sensibly weigh the blessings of their station  
against its hardships; and this is the reason

why they are happy. You must therefore always rest assured that the state which God hath called you to is the state that fuiteth your abilities, and if you endeavour to use them to the best of your knowledge, depend upon it you will be rewarded. You know, my Children, that the man who received only two talents did not make himself wretched by envying him who had five, but wisely turned his whole thoughts upon making the most of his two, and for which he entered into the joy of his Lord equally with him who had five.

Jonathan, the son of Saul, possessed all those virtues to which his miserable father was a stranger: we read that he loved David as his own soul, and it appearing that his regard took place immediately after the conquest of the Philistines, we may reasonably conclude that gratitude for his signal services to Israel was the beginning of that friendship which only death could break.

David being obliged to avoid the presence of Saul, who had more than once attempted his life, was assured by Jonathan that he would use all his endeavours to reconcile

his father, and promised to give him information how he succeeded.

Jonathan represented unto Saul the great and faithful services of David, and entreated him not to render evil for good, by slaying his servant without a cause; yet he still continued to seek the life of David, notwithstanding he had promised his son to spare him.

Under these distressing circumstances David remained during the life of Saul, flying from place to place in order to preserve himself from the wrath of his king and father.

Jonathan took every opportunity of seeing and comforting David, repeating the kindest assurances of his friendship, and strengthening him in his trust in God, saying, "Fear not, for the hand of Saul shall not hurt thee, and thou shalt be king over Israel."

Jonathans knowing that the Almighty designed that throne for David which otherwise he might have expected to have inherited, instead of creating in him envy and hatred, yielded him the highest satisfaction; a striking proof both of his exalt-

ed piety and friendship, obediently submitting to the will of his Creator, and rejoicing in the prosperity of his friend.

A fresh war breaking out between the Philistines and the Israelites called off Saul from pursuing David, and in this war Saul and his three sons fell.

The lamentation which David poured forth when he lost his beloved friend Jonathan, to whom he both owed and paid the highest gratitude, were equally natural as praise-worthy, but his behaviour upon the death of his enemy Saul was glorious: so far was David from rejoicing, that he mourned his untimely end; all his virtues rose to his remembrance, and all his cruelties and injustice were buried in the forgiveness of a righteous heart. The strong friendship between Jonathan and David plainly declareth their equal worth; it was the virtues of both that bound them to each other, for if either had been wicked, the other had not loved.

David was informed of the death of Saul by a young man, who said he had slain the King by his own desire, and that he had

brought his crown and his bracelet unto him. "How!" said David, "wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand against the Lord's anointed? Thy blood be upon thy head, for thy mouth hath testified against thee;" and immediately ordered him to be put to death.

Observe in this young man, my Children, the dreadful end of a liar; he caused himself to be punished with death for a crime which he had not committed. You all know that he did not slay Saul, for Saul wickedly slew himself; but the truth was he had robbed him when dead, and then carrying his crown and bracelet unto David, added the horrid lie that he first took his life, and for doing which I imagine he expected a reward. He certainly knew that Saul was the enemy of David, and judging of him by his own wicked heart, concluded that he would rejoice at the destruction of his foe; but David, who many times had the life of Saul in his power, would much rather have perished than have lifted up his hand against him.

There wanteth abilities, my Children, to

be a ſucessful liar, that few, if any, poſſeſſ ; whereas the weakeſt, pooreſt, moſt ignorant of mankind, are always capable of ſpeaking the truthe: the reaſon is plain, the Almighty requireth truthe from every one, and therefore he hath enabled every one to perform it. Whatever fault you may be guilty of, honeſtly acknowledgē it, be ſorry for your tranſgrefſion, and com-mit it no more; on theſe condi-tions the Almighty forgiueſt, and on theſe condi-tions every good perſon will forgiue.

After the death of Saul the men of Ju-dah anointed David their king, over whom he reigned ſeven years and ſix months before he was eſtabliſhed on the throne of Israel.

David, at the taking of Jeruſalem, (then in the Jebuſites' poſſeſſion) ordered the Je-buſites, the lame, and the blind, which were hated of his ſoul, to be deſtroyed. The lame and the blind, I imagine, were their idols, because David faſhioned in the Psalms, "Their " idols are the work of men's hands; they " have eyes but they ſee not; they have " hands but they handle not; feet have they " but they walk not." Now, both the idols

and those who worshipped them must have been truly hateful to the soul of David: besides we read, that after one of the times in which he defeated the Philistines he assisted himself in burning their images.

So soon as David enjoyed peace he determined upon removing the Ark to Jerusalem; and having assembled all the congregation of Israel, he said unto them, “ If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord our God, let us send unto the priests and Levites, and all our brethren who are abroad, to gather themselves unto us, and let us bring again the Ark of our God.” And all the congregation said that they would do so, for the thing was right in their eyes. So David and all Israel went to Kirjath-jearim, to bring up thence the Ark of God the Lord; and David (having put off his royal garment) was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as was likewise the Levites who bore the Ark, and all the singers. Thus David and all Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord with shouting, with the sound of the cornet, with trumpets, with cymbals, with

psalteries, and with harps. We likewise read that David danced before the Ark, by which he equally meant to express his joy as by playing on the harp.

David was very desirous to build an house unto the name of the Lord; but this the Almighty denied him, saying, “Thou hast made great wars, and shed blood abundantly, therefore thou shalt not build an house unto my name: but behold a son shall be born unto thee, who shall be a man of rest, and he shall build an house for my name.”

David now inquired if there were any left of the house of Saul, that he might shew them kindness for Jonathan’s sake; and being informed that Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was living, he commanded that he should be brought unto him, and treated him as his son. It is wonderful that David should be ignorant that Mephibosheth was living, and if he was not so, we must think it very wrong that he should not have made inquiry about him before; for though certainly his thoughts had been sufficiently employed, yet no worldly en-

gagements should have put off his gratitude for a moment, and those of religion demanded it should be interwoven with them.

The very dreadful calamities with which the Almighty visited David for breaking his commandments, both in respect of Uriah, and likewise in numbering of the people, are speaking lessons to warn you against disobeying his holy will and commandments; and his thorough contrition, his truly sincere repentance, are examples you must follow if ever you offend against or neglect to perform your duty. The Sixth and Seventh Commandments are known to you all, and I hope by all will be sacredly kept; but David's offence in having numbered the people may not be equally plain to you, (it being a transgression of the law of Moses,) and therefore I shall endeavour to make it so. The Almighty commanded Moses, when the sum of the children of Israel was taken, that every man, from twenty years old and upwards, should give an offering of half a shekel of silver as a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, and that the atonement-money should be appointed

for the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation: the neglecting to gather this tax, or the refusing to pay it, was to be punished with the plague. David, you know, ordered the people to be numbered, but he did not order the atonement-money to be given. Whether the first was necessary it is useless for us to inquire; but his having omitted the second was an open violation of God's command, and for which, by the prophet Gad, he gave him his choice of the following punishments----Seven years' famine, three months' flight before his enemies, or a pestilence of three days---David chose the pestilence, saying, "Let us fall into the hands of God, " for his mercies are great." So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, by which there died seventy thousand: but David's exceeding repentance, and his fervent prayers to the Almighty to spare the people, and turn all his wrath upon him, and on those whom he held most dear, was accepted; and the Lord mercifully stayed the plague.

You must observe, my Children, that not

withstanding David was so highly distinguished by divine favour, yet whenever he transgressed he was severely chastised for so doing ; and though he knew himself to be a chosen servant of his Lord, he never presumed upon that knowledge, nor idly imagined that his fault would be passed over ; on the contrary, however great his correction he never thought it greater than his offence, but received it with humlity, acknowledging that he deserved it ; his trust in God's mercy was as unbounded as his love of him, which perfected his repentance, and obtained him forgiveness.

I hope it is needless for me to make any remark either on the wicked behaviour of Absalom, or on the untimely end which it brought him to, as you all know it to be your Maker's command to honour and obey your parents, and that those children who dare to rebel against them, some way or other, bring themselves to ruin.

David being old, and drawing near his end, placed his son Solomon on the throne, into whom he gave the most pious and the wifest instructions, charging him to serve

his Maker with a perfect heart and a willing mind; to be diligent in the performance of that glorious work which the Almighty had chosen him to undertake, namely, to build an house of rest for the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord.

So David died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour.

## LESSON XX.

SOLOMON being seated on the throne of Israel, went to Gibeon to sacrifice unto the Lord, who appeared unto him in a dream by night, saying, "What shall I give thee?" "And Solomon said, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David his father, and thy servant is in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen; give, therefore, unto him an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that he may discern between good and bad." "And the Lord said unto him, Because thou hast asked wisdom, and hast not asked long life, nor riches, nor the lives of thine enemies, behold, I have done

“ according to thy desire; and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour; and if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, then I will add unto thee length of days.”

Two women who lived in the same house being brought to bed, one of them unfortunately overlaid her child, and going slyly to the bed of the other woman, who was asleep, exchanged the dead child for her living one. When the mother awaked she discovered the fraud, and charged the other woman with it, which charge she absolutely denied. The cause being brought before Solomon, he gave orders for the child to be divided, and each woman to have an half. Though this determination was not such as the wicked woman had hoped for, (that being to have the stolen child declared her's) yet she was tolerably well satisfied, thinking that she had deceived the King, and hereby concealed her guilt. The real mother, who before had been wretched at the thoughts of losing her child, now petitioned to yield it up, deeming *that* far preferable

to the seeing it slain before her eyes. This was proef sufficient, and the King ordered the child to be given to its mother. The wicked, my Children, should remember that the good do not *think*, any more than they *act*, like them: there are many guilty persons who are acquitted idly suppose they were thought innocent, and have frequently been known to boast that they had deceived the judge.----Mistaken unhappy wretches! his wisdom and discernment is not to be so imposed upon; he reads their consciences in their faces as plainly as you can read letters in a book. They owed their acquittal to a very different cause. The prisoner hath a friend in the breast of his judge silently pleading to his humanity, and whenever he seeth the least room for compassion, particularly where he beholdeth shame and contrition, if mercy can be shewn consistent with justice, he extends it with joy, hoping the guilty will live to repent and save his soul alive. But if mercy is abused, if a man returneth to his evil courses, and is again brought to the bar, then justice demands the punishment of the guilty for the safety and preservation of the innocent.

Solomon, according to his father's direction, began the Temple at Jerusalem, and in seven years it was completed.

The magnificence of this building exceeded every thing that ever had been heard of, the design of which was to pay the highest respect and reverence to the living God, unto whom Solomon dedicated it with great piety and solemnity.

The King, standing before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, spread forth his hands toward heaven, and said, "Lord God of Israel, there is no god like thee in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepeth covenant and mercy with thy servants who walk before thee with all their hearts: Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house which I have builded! Yet have thou respect unto the prayer and supplication of thy servant, O Lord my God, that thine eyes may be open towards this house night and day, even towards the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: Hearken thou to the

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“ supplication of thy servant, and of thy  
“ people Israel when they shall pray to  
“ wards this place, and hear thou in hea-  
“ ven thy dwelling-place, and when thou  
“ hearest forgive.”

Then the King arose from kneeling be-  
fore the altar, and with a loud voice blessed  
all the congregation of Israel, saying, “Bless-  
“ ed be the Lord who hath given rest unto  
“ his people Israel, according to all that he  
“ promised; there hath not failed one word  
“ of all his good promises which he promi-  
“ sed by the hand of Moses his servant. The  
“ Lord our God be with us as he was with  
“ our fathers; let him not leave us nor  
“ forsake us, but incline our hearts unto  
“ him, to walk in his ways, and to keep his  
“ commandments, his statutes, and his  
“ judgments, which he commanded our fa-  
“ thers; that all the people of the earth may  
“ know that the Lord is God, and that  
“ there is none else.”

It must be supposed that Solomon, at this  
time, little imagined he should ever wor-  
ship any other god than the living One;  
but having married with idolatrous women,

he was first prevailed upon to build them high places for their gods, and then to join in their abominable worship.

How plainer doth this teach us, my Children, that every one who standeth must take heed lest they fall! how plainly doth it shew us that we are not sufficient of ourselves to keep ourselves! Who would not then begin the day with an humble and fervent petition to their Creator, who alone can order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, to grant unto them his grace, that they may love and do those things which he commandeth; and to earnestly desire those good things which he hath promised to all who obey his holy will; that so among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, their hearts may stedfastly be fixed where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord?

July 11. 1837

## LESSON XXI.

DIVIDED INTO FOUR PARTS.

AFTER the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam succeeded to the throne, from whom ten tribes of Israel revolted, chusing Jeroboam for their king.---Thus the kingdom was divided,---Rehoboam being King of Judah, and Jeroboam King of Israel. You remember that the Almighty had said unto Solomon, " Forasmuch as thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee; notwithstanding I will not do it in thy days; nor will I rend away all the kingdom, but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."

The conduct of Rehoboam, in asking advice of the aged, from whom he received such as would have established him in the hearts of all Israel, and immediately after consulting with those whose youth and in-

experience was much like his own, and by following whose counsel he lost the greatest part of his kingdom, is a striking likeness of the conduct of many more than are aware of it. But, my Children, make this your rule, never ask advice but of those whose knowledge and goodness you have reason to think well of, and if their advice agrees with the good opinion which you had entertained of them, receive it with gratitude, and follow it with care.

As the reigns of the Kings of Judah and of Israel are written together, they may not perhaps be quite so clear to you as if they were distinct, and therefore I will first relate all the Kings of Judah, and then the Kings of Israel, making mention of those actions or events which you ought more particularly to observe in either of their reigns.

The first King of Judah, Rehoboam, and his subjects, forsaking the law of the Lord, were punished by the King of Egypt's making war against them, who took many of the cities belonging to Judah; but upon their humbling themselves at the reproof

of the prophet Shemaiah, the Almighty did not suffer them to be wholly overcome by the Egyptians, though they plundered the house of the Lord, and likewise that of the King.

Abijar, the second king, made war against Jeroboam King of Israel, over whom he gained a considerable victory, which he justly ascribed to divine assistance. Abijar severely reproached Jeroboam and his people for being idolaters, which, though *they* certainly deserved, yet Abijar reproached *himself* by so doing, he being an idolater likewise.

Reproaches or upbraiding, my Children, are always very wrong; whenever you attempt to advise another to forsake their fault, do it with tenderness, and let your kind manner convince them that your only reason for naming it is the desire of doing them good; but, above all, take care to be clear of the offence yourselves; for if your actions do not agree with your advice, it will not have the same weight with those to whom it is offered.

Afa, the third king, destroyed the altars

of the false gods, breaking in pieces even the idol which his mother had made and worshipped. The prophet Azariah exhorted Asa to continue in the service of the true God, saying unto him and his subjects, “The Lord is with *you* while *ye* be with *him*; “ and if you seek him he will be found of “ *you*; but if *ye* forsake *him*, *he* will forsake “ *you*.”

Jehoshaphat, the fourth king, following the good example of his father Asa, used every endeavour to abolish idolatry, sending priests throughout the cities of Judah to instruct his people in the law of the Lord:

The reproofs which Jehoshaphat received from the prophets Jehu and Eliezer for joining with Ahab and Ahaziah, because they were bad men, plainly sheweth that those who associate with the wicked, even though they are not wicked themselves, greatly offend their Creator. We pray him not to lead us into temptation; how then can we dare to carry ourselves into it? It is likewise very wrong to appear to give the wicked countenance, and whoever keepeth them company will be looked upon to do so.

Joram, the fifth king, marrying the daughter of Ahab, was by her seduced to idolatry, and his impious worship was followed by the whole kingdom. He put all his brethren to death, and committed many other horrid crimes, which drew on the anger of God, who visited him with divers and great afflictions.

Ahaziah, the sixth king, was likewise an idolater; he reigned only one year, being slain by the King of Israel. After his death Athaliah his mother usurped the throne, having first put all the royal family to death except Joash, her youngest grandson, who was preserved from the dreadful slaughter by his aunt, (wife of Jehoiada the high priest) who concealed him six years in the Temple. At the age of seven years his uncle placed him on the throne, and restored the worship of the living God in Judah. While Jehoiada lived Joash conducted himself wisely, but after his death both the King and the principal men of Judah fell into idolatry; which being reproved by the prophet Zechariah, Joash commanded him to be stoned to death in the Temple. This wicked

prince, having forsook the Lord, was by the Lord forsaken, and delivered up to the Syrians his enemies, dying at last by the hands of his own subjects, who murdered him on his bed.

Amaziah, the eighth king, so soon as he was seated on the throne, put to death the murderers of his father, justly sparing the lives of their children, the Almighty having commanded that the fathers should not die for the children, neither the children for the offences of the father.

Amaziah, being at war with the Edomites, had engaged one hundred thousand men of Israel to assist him, and to whom he was to pay a large sum of money; but by the advice of a prophet he dismissed them; notwithstanding he was obliged to pay the money, placing his whole trust in God for success. This right behaviour was blessed by the Almighty, Amaziah being victorious over the Edomites; but afterwards he wickedly bowed himself before the idols of the Edomites, for which the prophet reproving him, Amaziah threatened putting him to death.

The King of Israel, whom Amaziah had idly provoked, entered his kingdom, and prevailed against him, plundering the house of the Lord and that of the King's. At last he perished at Lachish by the hands of conspirators, who pursued him there from Jerusalem.

Uzziah, the ninth king, at the beginning of his reign conducted himself with wisdom and piety, listening to the advice of the prophet Zechariah, during which time the Almighty prospered his undertakings against the Philistines, strengthened him against the Arabians, and made the Ammonites his tributary. These great successes raised his name exceedingly among the people, which, instead of filling his heart with gratitude, love, and reverence, to the Author and Giver of every blessing, swelled him with pride, and he impiously attempted to offer incense in the Temple, which by the law of Moses should only have been performed by the priests; and for this offence the Almighty smote him with the leprosy.

It is not sufficient, my Children, to observe our duty at one time in our lives, or

to perform only some branches throughout it, but, as much as in us lies, we must at all times, and in every part, be righteous. We must likewise consider both the blessings and the afflictions which are sent by God as trials of our behaviour. In prosperity we must be thankful to the Almighty, acknowledging that we owe all the good things which we possess to his infinite mercy and goodness; we must take care never to be puffed up with pride, but to be humble, charitable, kind in our manner to those who are less prosperous, and ever ready to do them any good office in our power. We must always bear in our minds that the duty of example is a very high one; that the right or wrong doing of numbers may depend upon us; for the ignorant naturally look up for a pattern to those who are either by rank or prosperity placed above them, and therefore by our conduct we must endeavour to teach them their duty to God and to their neighbour.----In adversity, we must pray to the Almighty to bless us with a resolution to try every lawful method to help ourselves, and to patiently submit to what-

ever cannot be *so* removed; to give us grace stedfastly to believe that he will of his great mercy deliver us from, or support us under, all our misfortunes, he alone knowing what is best for us.

Jotham, the tenth king, did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and therefore he was protected and blessed by him throughout his life; he was victorious over the Ammonites, who paid to him large tribute: he built the high gate of the house of the Lord, likewise many cities, castles, and towers. Thus he enriched and strengthened his kingdom, and was a blessing to the people whom he reigned over.

Ahaz, the eleventh king, was as wicked as his father Jotham had been good, carrying the sin of idolatry beyond any of his predecessors; for he caused his children to perform the horrid ceremony of passing through the fire, (as the Canaanite had done, and for which the Almighty had cast them out of Israel) in honour of his shameful idols. You must observe the right behaviour of the Israelites, who, according to the advice of the prophet Oded,

back the men and women of Judah whom they had taken captives, which they performed with great tenderness and compassion, first clothing and refreshing them, and conveying on asses those who were unable to walk.

How exceeding great is the happiness, my Children, that the pleasing exercise of humanity should be so acceptable in the sight of the Lord; were it otherwise, those blessed hours in which we have by any means contributed either to the comfort or assistance of those who needed, would have passed unmarked with that felicity which ever attends them, it being impossible for our hearts to experience satisfaction from following our inclinations, without our duty alloweth us so to do.

Hezekiah, the twelfth king, was exceedingly pious, applying himself with great diligence to the restoration of the true religion. He immediately set about repairing the Temple; and assembling together the priests and Levites, he first exhorted them to purify themselves, and then to carry forth the filthiness out of the holy

place; that is, to remove all those things out of the Temple which had been used by his father for the wicked purposes of idolatry. This being done, Hezekiah and the rulers of the city made a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for all Israel; Hezekiah, knowing that the men of Israel were his brethren, (though only the men of Judah were his subjects) and therefore that it was his duty to pray for them, and to use all his endeavours to bring them back to the worship of the living God.---This, my Children, is likewise our duty as Christians, we praying, you know, unto the Almighty to have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics; to remove from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of his word, and to fetch them home to his flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hezekiah, intending to renew the feast of the Passover, caused his design to be proclaimed throughout Israel, inviting all to come to Jerusalem and keep it; persuading

them by letters, with a fatherly affection, to forsake their evil ways, saying, "Be ye not stiff-necked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord; enter into his sanctuary, and serve him truly, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn; for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him."

Tho' there were some of the apostate Jews who did not regard this pious invitation, yet there were many who did, and devoutly partook of the Passover, notwithstanding they had not had time to prepare themselves according to the direction given in the law of Moses; and the Lord, who knew the purity of their intentions, and likewise the little opportunity they had for preparation, most mercifully accepted them, as the following plainly sheweth.---Hezekiah, though well assured that it was every one's duty to observe purification before they presumed to eat of the Passover, did not think the want of it, when it was not practicable, a sufficient reason for abstaining from that holy feast; he acknowledged their undue pre-

paration, and implored the mercy of God, saying, “ The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his *heart* to seek God, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary ; and the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.”

This portion of Sacred history, my Children, must be a lesson hereafter to you never to keep from partaking of the blessed sacrament, thinking that you have not had time sufficient to prepare yourselves : carefully observe to do so whenever you have opportunity ; but supposing the state which God calleth you to should admit of very little spare time, if you faithfully perform your duty therein, keeping God’s holy will and commandments, you may approach the table of our blessed Lord, trusting in his all-sufficient merits for acceptance.

Among the many good regulations made by Hezekiah, providing for the priests and Levites was not omitted, the people being commanded to pay the tithes and first-fruits, which command they faithfully obeyed.

Hezekiah being attacked by the Affyrians, took every prudent method to defend his kingdom, but his trust for deliverance was placed wholly in God, saying to his people, “ Be strong and courageous ; fear not the “ King of Affyria ; with him is an arm of “ flesh, but with us is the Lord our God.”

The King of Affyria sent messengers to Jerusalem, saying, “ Thus saith Sennacherib, “ --- Wherein do ye trust, that ye abide in “ the siege in Jerusalem ? Doth not Hezekiah “ persuade you to give yourselves over to “ death, saying, The Lord our God shall de- “ liver us ? --- Know ye not what I and my “ fathers have done unto all the people of “ other lands ? Were the gods of those na- “ tions any way able to deliver them out “ of mine hand ? how much less shall your “ God deliver you ? ”

These and many more blasphemous speeches filled the heart of Hezekiah with horror, and he prayed unto the Lord, saying, “ O Lord God of Israel, who dwellest “ between the cherubins ; thou art God, “ even thou alone ; thou hast made heaven “ and earth : bow down thine ear and hear ;

“ open, Lord, thine eyes, and see; hear the  
“ words of Sennacherib, who hath sent to  
“ reproach the living God. O Lord our  
“ God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of  
“ his hand, that all the kingdoms of the  
“ earth may know that thou art the Lord  
“ God, even thou only.”---And the Lord  
sent an angel, who destroyed in one night  
the numerous army of the Affyrians, their  
king returning with shame of face to his  
own land, where he was murdered by his  
wicked sons.

Soon after this great deliverance Hezekiah received another mark of divine favour, being healed of a deadly disease; at which time the Lord caused the shadow of the sun on his dial to go back ten degrees, as a sign from him to Hezekiah of the certainty of his recovery.

Ambassadors being sent by the King of Babylon, with a present and letters of congratulation to Hezekiah on his recovery, he shewed them all that was curious and valuable in Jerusalem.---This action, which appeareth to be no more than that civility which is mutually paid and received by

mankind, was, as we learn from Isaiah's re-proof, attended with secret pride. These ambassadors were subjects of the greatest monarch in the world; and possibly Hezekiah's intention, in displaying to them his riches, was the **vain** desire of appearing equally great with their master.

As this fault of Hezekiah's, my Children, is often committed even in the lowest state of life, I warn you, as the true friend of your happiness, carefully to shun it. The desire of appearing above what we really are frequently arises from a desire of being more respected; but by taking this contrary path we can never obtain our end.--- Whatever your situations may be, turn all your endeavours to excel in them; acquaint yourselves with their duties, and steadily apply to the fulfilling them:----thus will you be respected as valuable members in your stations; thus will you be named as worthy examples; whereas you will, by apeing the station that is above you, be looked upon as intruders, and as such will be despised.

Hezekiah, after a reign of twenty-nine years, died, greatly lamented by his subjects,

who paid every possible respect to his memory.

Manasseh, the thirteenth king, instead of following the good example of his righteous father, was an idolater, practising many abominable crimes.---The Almighty, who never desireth the death of a sinner, sent his prophets to endeavour to turn him from his evil ways ; notwithstanding which Manasseh and his people continued to provoke the Most High to wrath, who permitted him to be carried in chains a captive into Babylon. Though the loving-kindness of God could not soften the heart of Manasseh, yet his correction did ; for in captivity he humbled himself before his Creator, who mercifully restored him to liberty ; and he spent the remainder of his days in penitence, using all his endeavours to promote the worship of the living God.

This shews us, my Children, that the Almighty's corrections are mercies ;---he sendeth them to call home sinners from destruction ;---and if we make this use of them, we shall receive them as blessings, and for which we shall render our unfeigned thanksgivings unto God.

Amon, the fourteenth king, was an idolater; he reigned only two years, being slain in a conspiracy.

Josiah, the fifteenth king, who ascended the throne when but eight years of age, was righteous from the beginning of his days, and at an early period of his life devoted his endeavours to abolish idolatry, and establish the worship of the only God. Hilkiah the priest having found the book of the Law, sent it unto the King, who consulted Hul-dah the prophetess concerning the dreadful threatenings which it contained. Hul-dah informed him that the Almighty was going to execute those threatenings upon Judah, the iniquity of the people having drawn down his anger; but before these visitations took place Josiah would be removed from this world.

Thus, my Children, we see that the good are always the objects of the Almighty's tenderest care; an early grave to the righteous is the sanctuary of love appointed them by God; he taketh them hence from approaching sorrows, to those mansions of bliss where all sorrow ceases, and everlasting happiness begins.

Josiah, gathering together the elders and all the people, went into the Temple, where they renewed the covenant with God: he then gave orders for preparations to be made to keep the Passover, which was observed with so great solemnity, that no Passover had been performed like that from the days of Samuel the prophet.

Josiah being slain in war against the King of Egypt, was exceedingly lamented throughout his kingdom, and also by the prophet Jeremiah.

Religion, like Josiah's, my Children, which was exercised for the benefit of all within his power, would in the lowest state of life have raised him to respect; for even many who are wicked feel a reverence for piety, and acknowledge they admire, though they have not resolution to practise it.

Jehoahaz, the sixteenth king, in three months after he had been placed on the throne was deposed by the King of Egypt, who made the brother of Jehoahaz king, changing his name from Eliakim to Jehoakim. This prince, giving himself up to sin and idolatry, was carried captive into Ba-

bylon, and on his return to Jerufalem was there slain.

Jehoiachin, the eighteenth king, after being on the throne a few months, was carried by Nebuchadnezzar captive to Babylon, who placed Zedekiah on the throne. Under this wicked king Judah was destroyed, Jerufalem with the Temple being burnt; all the sacred vefels, and all the treasures, both of the house of God and of the King's, being carried to Babylon, and likewise all the people who escaped from the sword.--- This is called the Babylonish Captivity.

You must here observe, my Children, the tender mercy of the Almighty to this rebellious people. We read, that before he suffered the Jews to be carried into captivity he sent messengers to exhort them to re-pentance, because he had compassion on his people; but they mocked the messengers of God, despised his words, and misused his prophets, so that his wrath was kindled, and there was no remedy.

## LESSON XXII.

DIVIDED INTO FOUR PARTS.

JEROBOAM, the first king of Israel, being apprehensive if he suffered his new subjects to go to Jerusalem to worship God of their returning to their former king, ordered two golden calves to be made, and saying to the people that it was a long journey to Jerusalem; prevailed on them to worship God under the likeness of those images.--- Thus they broke the Second Commandment in the same manner that their forefathers had done in the wilderness, and I hope you all remember how severely the Almighty punished that transgression.--- While Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense, a prophet, who came from Judah, foretold the destruction of it by a king of the race of David, named Josiah, which prediction was instantly confirmed by the two following miracles;---the altar was rent, and the hand of Jeroboam, (which he had put forth to lay hold on the prophet) withered;

but upon the prophet's praying unto the Almighty to heal him, the use of his hand was restored.

Jeroboam, inviting this prophet to return with him to his house, and take some refreshment, he informed the King that the Lord had forbidden him to eat in that place:--- however, he suffered himself to be prevailed upon by a prophet of Beth-el (who deceived him with a false relation) to sit down and eat with him. This transgression was punished with death, he being killed by a lion on his way to Judah; of which the prophet of Beth-el being informed, he conveyed back the body, and laid it in his own sepulchre, wherè he was afterwards likewise buried.

The Josiah, my Children, here spoken of by this prophet, was Josiah the fifteenth King of Judah, who, three hundred years afterwards (with the rest of the idolatrous altars in Israel) destroyed that in Beth-el; at which time Josiah, having asked concerning this sepulchre, was informed that a prophet of Judah was laid therein, who had

foretold all those things which he had done against the altar.

The son of Jeroboam being sick, he desired his queen to disguise herself, and inquire of the prophet Ahijah whether his illness would prove fatal. Immediately, upon her entering the prophet's house he acquainted her that she was known to him; that her son would die; and that the whole family of Jeroboam would be destroyed for his idolatry. This prophesy was soon completed, his son dying at the time foretold, and Nadad, the second King of Israel, (son and successor of Jeroboam) being murdered in two years after he was placed on the throne by Baasha, who spared not one of the house of Jeroboam.

Baasha, the third king, was informed by Jehu that his posterity would be cut off, as Jeroboam's had been, because he continued the abomination of idolatry. This was fulfilled in the reign of his son Elah, the fourth king, who was murdered, and his whole family, by Zimri.

So soon as Zimri, the fifth king, was seated on the throne, the men of Israel besieged

Tirzah, where he then was making Omri, the captain of the host, their king ; which when Zimri heard, he set fire to the palace, and thereby put an end to his wicked life.

Thus, my Children, the iniquity of one person may, by the directing power of God, prove a scourge for the offences of another. The sin of Jeroboam was punished by the wickedness of Baasha, and his guilt was chastised by the crimes of Zimri.

Omri, the sixth king, was guilty of many and horrid crimes, added to that of idolatry.---He built Samaria, which was afterwards the capital of the kingdom of Israel.

Ahab, the seventh king, is spoken of in the Sacred history as more wicked than any of his predecessors. In the reign of this king lived the great prophet Elijah, who was commanded by God to acquaint Ahab that Israel would be visited with a drought of three years ; at the beginning of which the Almighty instructed Elijah to withdraw to the side of the brook Cherith, where he was daily supplied with food by the ravens ; the brook at length drying up, the Lord commanded him to go to the house of a widow.

at Zarepath, whom he found preparing for herself and son their only remaining food; which melancholy circumstance she related to the prophet, who said unto her, "Fear not; for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 'Thy meal shall not waste, neither shall thy oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.' In some little time after the son of this widow dying, he was, at the prayers of Elijah, raised again to life; his mother, who had ascribed his death to the presence of the prophet, when she beheld her son restored, said unto him, 'Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true.'

Elijah, being commanded by God to inform Ahab that there should again be rain, was met on his way by Obadiah, governor of the King's house, who, notwithstanding his master was the most wicked of men, nobly maintained his integrity, and dared to be righteous himself, though placed in the midst of sinners and idolaters. Jezebel, the queen, had ordered all the prophets of God to be destroyed, but by the pious care

of Obadiah one hundred were preserved, whom he comforted and supported in their concealment.

Whenever you can lawfully, my Children, avoid dwelling in the tents of ungodliness, it is absolutely right so to do; but if your duty demands you to be there, it cannot, without your own consent, oblige you to be unrighteous; on the contrary, it may afford you the blessed power of being the protector or assistant of those who otherwise might have fallen victims to the example or enticement of the wicked: you may guard them against the false promises of sin; you may acquaint them of the certain happiness to which righteousness will lead; you may assure them of their Maker's being always by their side, who will strengthen every good purpose in their hearts, support them under every trial, and cover them with his love in all danger.

Obadiah having made known that Elijah was approaching, the King went out to meet him, and said unto him, "Art thou he who 'troubleth Israel?'" To which the prophet made answer, "I have not troubled Israel;

“ but thou, and thy father’s house, in that  
“ ye have forsaken the Lord, and followed  
“ Baalim. If the Lord be God, serve him;  
“ but if Baal is, then serve him.”

Elijah then proposed that the priests should offer a sacrifice unto Baal, and that *he* would offer one to the Lord; that neither should provide any fire;----that each should call on the name of their God, and that the deity who sent fire down from heaven should be acknowledged the true one. This being agreed to, each prepared their victim;--that for Baal remained untouched; but that for the Lord was by fire from heaven immediately consumed. When the people beheld this miracle, they fell on their faces, saying, “ The Lord, he is the God; “ the Lord, he is the God.” Elijah then ordered all the priests of Baal to be put to death, in which he obeyed the command of God given in the law of Moses.

Ahab, having an inclination to a vineyard which joined to his garden, sent for Naboth the owner, and offered either to buy it, or give him another in exchange; but Naboth, knowing this was contrary

to the command of God, (which forbade the Israelites to dispose of their land) refused him. This being told to Jezebel, she gave orders for Naboth, upon a false accusation, to be put to death, desiring the king would then take possession of his vineyard. So soon as this very horrid deed was committed, Elijah acquainted Ahab that the Lord would cut off both him and Jezebel for their iniquities, and likewise all their posterity.

I shall not, my Children, dwell upon Elijah's denunciation, which followed swiftly the crime of Ahab and Jezebel, because you are already informed that every sin committed, either publicly or in private, must be known unto God, and by him will certainly be punished ; but I shall speak of the behaviour of Naboth, it being a pattern for you to observe. When he refused his vineyard to Ahab, he respectfully rendered a just reason for so doing ; had he rudely given a denial he would have transgressed in his duty to his betters. All the commandments being made by God, your duty to him requires your observance of each, and

they are made so perfect, that the fulfilling of one can never occasion the breaking of another; therefore, if your duty to God should ever oblige you to refuse any request made by your superior, take care to do it with respect, lest you offend in your duty to your betters, unto whom you are commanded to order yourselves lowly and reverently.

Ahaziah, the eighth king, having received a fall, sent messengers to his idol Baal-zebub to know if he should recover; Elijah meeting these messengers, said unto them, " Go tell your master, thus saith the Lord, " Is it not because there is not a God in " Israel that thou sendest to inquire of Baal- " zebub? Therefore thou shalt not come " down from that bed on which thou art " gone up, but shalt surely die." --- Ahaziah having sent a body of soldiers to secure Elijah, the Almighty caused fire to fall from heaven and destroy them; the king then sent another party, which were likewise thus destroyed. --- We behold in this miracle, my Children, that the same stroke by which the wicked perished the righteous man was preserved.

Though Jehoram, the ninth king, put down the worship of Baal, we read that he cleaved to the sins of Jeroboam, which meaneth, that he continued to worship the golden calves.

Elijah having, by the command of God, anointed Elisha as a prophet, said unto him, "What shall I do for thee before I am taken hence?" to which Elisha made answer, "I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me."

Elijah, knowing that the hour was come in which he should be removed from this world, attempted many times to prevail on Elisha to leave him, but he would not be persuaded to quit his master; and while they were talking, Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire.

The mantle of Elijah falling, it was taken up by Elisha, who procured a passage thro' the river Jordan, by smiting the waters therewith, as Elijah had done some little time before.

Upon Elisha's entering the city of Beth-el, some wicked children insulted him, saying, "Go up, thou Baldhead." This shame-

ful behaviour was immediately punished by God, who caused two bears to come out of the wood and devour them.

These wicked young people, my Children, I imagine always laughed at the aged, and therefore it pleased the Almighty to cut them down in the flower of their days; but I trust your behaviours will be such as becometh the children of God, by whom you are commanded to rise up before the hoary head, and to honour the face of the ancient man.

The King of Israel, who was at war with the Moabites, passing with the King of Judah and the King of Edom (who assisted him) through the wilderness of Edom, were greatly distressed for water, which Elisha miraculously procured them, and by the same miracle made them victorious over the Moabites.

The widow of one of the sons, that is, disciples, of the prophets, being in the deepest distress, related her unhappy situation to Elisha, who inquired whether she had any thing valuable remaining? She replied, that all she had left was one cruse of oil. Elisha

then bade her to borrow a considerable number of vessels, and, aided by her sons, to pour oil into each, which should continue to increase till all the vessels were full. The woman having done according to Elisha's direction, acquainted him therewith, who told her to sell the oil, and, after discharging her debt, to live with her children upon the money that remained.

Thus we are taught, that righteous parents are laying up treasure in heaven for their children, of which they can never be deprived but by themselves; for while they are good the Almighty is their guardian, and he never will withdraw his tender care, unless they wickedly depart from him.

A Shunammite woman, with her husband, having shewn much kindness to Elisha, paying him every respect because he was an holy man, were promised by the prophet a son, which was accordingly fulfilled. In after-time the boy, being in the field with his father, was suddenly taken ill and carried home, where he died in the lap of his mother, which she making known to Elisha, he prayed unto the Lord, and raised their child again to life.

There having been, through ignorance, something poisonous mixed in the pottage prepared for the disciples of the prophets, it was, by Elisha's casting in some meal, immediately rendered fit for use.

There being only twenty barley loaves, when an hundred men were to be fed, the servant of Elisha acquainted him that there was not sufficient to set before them; but Elisha said unto him, "Thus saith the Lord, ---they shall eat, and shall leave thereof." And according to the word of the Lord so it was.

Naaman, captain of the host of the King of Syria, having the leprosy, a little Hebrew maid, who had been taken captive by the Syrians, and lived servant with Naaman's wife, expressing an earnest wish that her master was with Elisha, who would certainly restore him, he determined upon going to Samaria; and the King of Syria sent a letter to the King of Israel, wherein he desired that Naaman might be healed. When the King of Israel read the letter he was exceedingly disquieted, saying "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that

“ this man sendeth his servant unto me to  
“ be restored? --- He surely seeketh a quarrel  
“ against me.” --- Elisha, being informed of  
this, sent unto the king, saying “ Where-  
“ fore art thou troubled? let him come to  
“ me, and he shall know that there is a pro-  
“ phet in Israel.” --- Naaman then went to  
the house of Elisha, who sent him word  
to wash seven times in the river Jordan,  
and he should be clean. --- As Naaman had  
imagined that something extraordinary  
would be performed, he went from the door  
of Elisha greatly dissatisfied, saying to his  
attendants, “ Are not the rivers of Da-  
“ mascus better than all the waters of  
“ Israel?” --- However, his servants, who ap-  
pear to have exceedingly loved their master,  
entreated him to make the trial; to whose  
request he seemeth to have complied,  
knowing that it proceeded from their  
grateful affection; and, after having dipped  
seven times in the water, he was perfectly  
cured of his leprosy. --- Naaman going di-  
rectly to Elisha, said unto him, “ Now I  
“ know that there is no God in all the earth  
“ but in Israel. --- I pray thee take a present

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“ of thy servant.”---But Elisha said unto him, “ As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none.”---Naaman then asked permission to take with him two mules’ burden of the earth of Samaria, to raise in his own land an altar to the living God, being determined never after to offer either burnt-offering or sacrifice but unto the Lord.

So soon as Naaman had departed from Samaria, Gehazi, servant to Elisha, went after him, and in the name of his master asked of him a talent of silver and two changes of raiment: but Naaman, who had longed to pay Elisha some tribute of gratitude, insisted upon his taking back two. ---When Gehazi appeared before his master, he questioned him where he had been? to which Gehazi replied, “ Thy servant went “ nowhere.”---This lie, which Gehazi told to conceal a dishonest deed, was, with the deed, immediately detected by his master, who punished his crimes by afflicting him with the dreadful disease of which Naaman had been cured.

The conduct of Naaman’s maid, and the

prophet Elisha's man, I hope, my Children, you will carefully consider: in Gehazi you behold the thief and the liar discovered, notwithstanding he had as much reason as any wicked person whatever to hope that his guilt would be secret: his master having been a prophet maketh no difference, for his offences were known unto God, and by *him* revealed to Elisha.---The behaviour of Naaman's maid I have always imagined to be such as must have procured her the regard of her master and mistress. There is every reason for supposing that Naaman was a truly worthy man, and from which I conclude that he caused the little captive to be treated with humanity; this, adding gratitude to the duty which she owed him as his servant, occasioned her so earnestly to wish him with the prophet of God to be healed.---Notwithstanding these and divers other miracles wrought by Elisha, they made no impression upon Jehoram, for when Samaria was besieged by the Syrians, which occasioned a most dreadful famine, he sought the life of the prophet, declaring him to be the cause of those calamities.

Elisha having predicted that the Samaritans should on the following day experience the most astonishing plenty, a lord on whom the king leaned derided his prophecy, saying, "Could this come to pass even if 'the Lord were to make windows in heaven?' To which Elisha replied, that his eyes should see the plenty, but that he should not eat thereof.---This was fulfilled; for on the day that he beheld Samaria delivered from war, and flowing with plenty, he was crushed to death in the gate, of which the king had appointed him keeper.

Jehu being, by the command of God, anointed the tenth king of Israel, he immediately put to death Jehoram, his wicked mother Jezebel, and all those who remained of the house of Ahab, by which the prophecy of Elijah was fulfilled,---namely, that all the posterity of Ahab should be cut off for his abominable iniquities.

Jehu having gathered together all the worshippers of Baal, by proclaiming a solemn assembly for him, ordered them to be put to death, his house to be destroyed, and the worship of that idol to be utterly

abolished ; nevertheless his heart was not right with the Lord, because he continued the worship of the golden calves, and for which we read that in his days the Lord began to cut Israel short, that is, to suffer Hazael King of Syria to oppress the Israelites.

Jehoahaz, the eleventh king, continuing the idolatrous worship of his father, was equally oppressed by the Syrians ; yet upon his praying unto God for assistance, he mercifully hearkened to his supplication, notwithstanding which Jehoahaz forgot the Lord who had preserved him, and remained a shameful idolater.

Joash, the twelfth king, was also an idolater, and yet it should seem, from the great respect which he entertained for the prophet of God, that his conscience went not with his ways.---Many of the kings of Israel would most undoubtedly have worshipped the living God, had not a mistaken view to worldly interest prevented them ; for tho' there was not a single king of the Ten Tribes who did not follow the sin of Jeroboam, there were many who abolished all other

idolatry ; but that of the golden calves having been introduced from policy by the first king, it was by each of his successors kept up from the same motive.

Jeroboam, the thirteenth king, continued an idolater, notwithstanding the Almighty, in tenderness to Israel, blessed him with many successes over his enemies.

Zechariah, the fourteenth king, was also an idolater ; he was slain by Shallum in six months after he had ascended the throne.

Shallum, the fifteenth king, reigned only one month, being slain by Menahem.

Menahem, the sixteenth king, besides being an idolater, was guilty of the most shocking cruelties that an heart given up to wickedness could invent.

Pekahiah, the seventeenth king, was likewise an idolater ; he was slain in his palace by one of his captains, having reigned in Samaria two years.

Pekah, the eighteenth king, was an idolater ; in his days many of the Israelites were carried captive to Affyria ; he was slain by Hoshea, who was the nineteenth and last king of the Ten Tribes, for in his reign the kingdom was destroyed by the King of Af.

syria, who carried the Israelites into captivity. Thus, by the wickedness and ingratitude of this people, was the kingdom of Israel brought to destruction.

The merciful design, my Children, of the Almighty, in all the miracles performed by his prophets, was to convince the stubborn Israelites that he alone was God ; and tho' many appear to have been wrought either for the preservation or reward of the righteous, yet were they principally wrought for *their* conviction, as the Almighty could have preserved his prophets, and blessed his faithful servants, without displaying his power unto Israel.

Those subjects of the King of Affyria who were sent to dwell in Samaria, following their false worship, were by the Almighty afflicted with lions, who destroyed numbers of the people ; whereupon their king sent one of the Israelitish priests to instruct them in the worship of the living God ; they continued, however, the service of their idols, notwithstanding they worshipped the God of heaven.---From this mixed religion sprang the sect called Samaritans.

## LESSON XXIII.

THE book of Ezra, my Children, informs you that the Jews, after having been seventy years in captivity, were permitted by Cyrus to return into Judea, and rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of God, under the direction of Zerubbabel, a prince of Judah, and Jeshua the high priest. When the Jews had laid the foundation of the Temple, those ancient people, who remembered the beautiful one which was built by Solomon, and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, could not refrain from tears; however, though the magnificence of the second Temple was by no means equal to the first, yet it far surpassed it in glory.---“I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, (by his prophet Haggai) fill this house with glory; “and the glory of this latter house shall “be greater than that of the former.”---This was accomplished by the presence of the Son of God, the Divine Babe being carried there shortly after he was born, which fulfilled this prophecy of Malachi, “The

“ Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come  
“ to his Temple.”

Many were the difficulties which the Jews had to encounter, their undertaking being opposed by some of the neighbouring nations, and likewise by the Samaritans; but the Almighty was mercifully pleased to send his prophets to comfort and encourage them; and in the reign of Darius they were suffered to proceed with the building, receiving from that King noble supplies to enable them to complete it; and by whom they were required (though an Heathen) to offer unto the living God prayers and sacrifices for him and his family.

In about four years, the Temple being finished and dedicated, the Passover was celebrated with equal joy and solemnity.

Ezra, who was a priest of great knowledge and piety, effected divers regulations among the Jews, particularly that of putting away their idolatrous wives, many having contracted those unlawful marriages; but it must be observed, that their readily consenting to do so is a mark that they were sensible of their fault, and desirous to amend.

## LESSON XXIV.

THE book of Nehemiah, my Children, carries on the history of the Jews after they had finished the Temple.

The ruinous condition of the city of Jerusalem being a deep affliction to that righteous man Nehemiah, (who was cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes) he fervently implored the Almighty to behold it with compassion, and to incline the heart of the king his master to permit him to go unto Jerusalem, and build up the wall of the city. Nehemiah, whom it plainly appeareth had conducted himself with exceeding goodness and justice in his situation, was highly regarded by his master, who perceiving him to be in trouble, most tenderly inquired the cause, which Nehemiah acquainted him with, and requesting his leave to go to Jerusalem, the king with great kindness consented.

This shews you, my Children, that in whatever nation your state of life may place you, if you carry there a righteous

heart, it cannot fail to make you friends. There are good people in every country, and the good always shew kindness to those who deserve it. If their religion or customs should differ from those of your own nation, remember that *your* religion forbiddeth you to laugh at or ridicule either: regard not unkindness from some, and resent not rude things that others may say of your religion or country, but consider that there are wicked and ignorant persons in every nation as well as your own: be careful to behave with civility to every one, respectfully to all who are good, and to silently avoid keeping company with those who are not so: remember that the sick, and those in any other affliction, have a right to your assistance, your tenderness, and your good will: such behaviour will ask much better than words whether your religion and country deserve to be despised; this will be shewing unto the wicked the beauty of holiness, and you may possibly be the means of turning some to their duty, by thus modestly and steadily pursuing your own. As it may not be in your power to worship

God in public according to the manner which your religion directs, (and you must not do it in any other) be doubly attentive to perform it in private; you know that he will be present wherever you are; that he will direct your heart to do always that which is right, and guard you in all danger, ghostly and bodily, if you stedfastly cleave unto him.

Instructed and encouraged by the wisdom, piety, and diligence, of Nehemiah, the Jews completed the wall of the city, which was dedicated with heart-felt thanksgiving and grateful joy.

Many are the times, I hope, my dear Children! that you will read the book of Nehemiah both with pleasure and advantage; the prayer in the ninth chapter, of which there cannot be any thing more glorious, you will thoroughly understand, because you are now so well acquainted with the whole history of the Jews; and the behaviour of Nehemiah in each action of his life was such as every one must endeavour to follow; for though neither of you will ever be cup-bearer to the king, or

governor of a city, yet you will be placed in some station, and whatever that station may prove, like him you may be righteous; you may abhor every kind of unlawful gain; you may keep a disinterested heart that scorns to be covetous, and that singeth for joy whenever it can cast a mite into the treasury: and believe your old mistres, my Children, if prudence is faithfully observed, this is a blessing that you may often enjoy. Let no ill adviser persuade you that carefulness is stingines; for the first is a virtue, and the last is a vice. If the rich who are good were not more prudent than many of the poor, they would not be able to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and relieve the sick and the prisoner; every one could, if they so pleased, *spend* their whole income, but the goodnes of their heart directs a portion to be *given*; and yet that glorious economy which *saves* in order to *beflow*, hath often by the wicked been called *stinginess*.

Some years ago a rich gentleman in London, at one of the times when wheat was very dear, being applied to by the parish officers, who were making a collection for

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the benefit of the poor, answered that he would speak to them as soon as he had finished the business he was about;--which business was reproving his maid for having put a long piece of candle into the fire.--- He then asked the officers how they intended to lay out the money? and being satisfied with their reply, took out his pocket-book and gave them a piece of paper. When they were out of the house they opened it, and to their astonishment it was an hundred pounds note. The sum being much greater than any body had given, they thought it was a mistake, and therefore carried it back. When the gentleman looked at it, he said,  
" No; it is not a mistake; I designed giving  
" an hundred pounds; but I know what  
" made you think that it was; you heard  
" me angry with my servant for wasting  
" a piece of candle, and concluded that a  
" careful man must be a covetous one; but  
" the mistake lies with you, for whoever  
" is desirous of relieving the distressed, will  
" be prudently careful in order to enable  
" himself to do so."

Remember, my dearest Children! through-

out your lives, never to be guilty of any waste; for the great pattern of mankind, the Son of God, set the example of carefulness himself, who, when he had fed the multitude by a miracle, making five loaves and two small fish sufficient to feed five thousand people, ordered the fragments to be gathered up that nothing might be lost.

### LESSON XXV.

You learn from the history of Esther, my Children, a duty which is highly pleasing both in the sight of God and man,---the love of your country.

We read that it was death by the law for anyonetopresentthemselves before the king, without they were commanded by him to do so; notwithstanding which Esther ventured to approach him, and use all her endeavours to save her people from destruction.----She considered, as every good person does, that she was not born for herself alone; and when the safety of her nation was at stake, it was her duty to risk even her life for its preservation.

If fear had prevailed, and the Jews had been put to death, Esther would have destroyed her happiness by having taken a guilty method to secure it; for her conscience would daily have reproached her as the murderer of her people, because she had not used her endeavours to preserve them.

This must teach you, that neither fear nor shame, threats nor promises, should prevent you from doing what your conscience tells you to be right....Conscience, my Children, is a guide which the Almighty hath given to each of us; it is placed in our breast, to teach us to do those things which ought to be done, and to warn us against doing those things which ought not to be done. Begin, in your young days, to consult your faithful little guide; it cannot deceive you, because it came from God; and if you follow its direction, unto God it will carry you; but if you attempt to cast it off, if you ever dare to commit an action which conscience strictly forbiddeth, it will be as a fiery serpent at your heart, whose bite will prove intolerable.

To love our country is the duty of us

all, but the duty of defending it I must tell to you boys.---The nation you are born in is your parent nation; it is called your Mother-country, and as your mother you must love it: now, where is the boy that would hear his mother was in danger, and not run to her assistance? His duty, his love, and his courage, all teach him to defend his mother.---It is thus, my dear Boys! you must do by your mother-country; when she is in danger you must remember that you are her sons.

The wretchedness of Haman, my dear Children! is the wretchedness that will ever attend those wicked people who either envy or hate another: his building a gallows for Mordécai, and being hanged upon it himself, must be a lasting lesson to you never to do or wish any thing to another that you would not have done unto yourselves, but to constantly remember that the eye of the Lord is upon all your actions, and that he likewise knoweth your inmost thoughts; that to him every heart is open, every desire known, and from whom no secret can be hidden.

## LESSON XXVI.

You have seen, in the history of Job, my Children, a man, who was once surrounded with every blessing, reduced to the lowest state of misery.---His behaviour in both these situations you must very carefully attend to.

When he was rich he enjoyed his possessions by fearing God and eschewing evil.---He set not his heart upon his gold, nor said to it, Thou art my confidence; but, in humble imitation of the Author and Giver of every good gift, he opened his hand and blessed all around him. The fatherless ate of his bread, and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. He left not the poor to perish, and he clothed the naked with the fleece of his sheep. He lived in peace and good-will with his neighbour, nor suffered his mouth to sin by wishing evil even to those who hated him. He was a tender and a righteous father, making offerings to the Almighty for all his children. He was a kind and good master, refusing not

to hear the just complaints of his servants: He was upright in all his dealings, and righteousness clothed him as a garment:

When calamities encompassed him like a whirlwind, stripping him of all his mighty possessions, and, of what was much dearer, his children, he fell down and worshipped the Almighty, saying, "The Lord gave, and "the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the "name of the Lord."

When his body was afflicted with a sore disease, even from the sole of his foot unto his crown, and his wife, who served not the living God, (she being an idolatress) derided his integrity, and told him to curse God and die, he did not resent her unnatural behaviour to *him*, but only rebuked her indecent expressions of his God.—"What," said he, "shall we receive good at the hand of "God, and shall we not receive evil? Thou "speakest foolishness."

His very friends added to his sufferings, by cruelly supposing that he must have been wicked, because he was afflicted, and, in the most aggravating manner, turned even his virtues to a crime,---saying, "Thy words

“ have upholden him that was falling, and  
“ thou hast comforted the feeble; but now  
“ it is come upon thee thou faintest, it  
“ toucheth thee, and thou art troubled....  
“ Whoever perished being innocent? and  
“ when were the righteous cut off?....If  
“ thou wert pure and upright, surely God  
“ would make the habitation of thy righ-  
“ teousness prosperous.”

Afflictions so heavy appear to us insupportable, yet such is the strength of piety, that it sustained Job to the last; for in all this he sinned not, nor charged God foolishly; and therefore the Almighty rewarded his virtue, by doubling to him his former possessions, and blessing his latter-end even more than his beginning.

I hope, my Children, you observed how highly the Almighty was displeased with Job's friends for daring to conclude that he was wicked because he was afflicted; and as this is a fault which the poor commit much oftener than the rich, (arising from their ignorance) I think it my duty to inform you that the Lord will not hold those guiltless who do it after they have been

taught that it is offending their Maker. You must remember, that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." This you plainly see in the history of Job, whose afflictions were so uncommonly severe, and yet he was pronounced by his Maker to be a perfect and an upright man.

Every virtue of Job's I hope will be written upon your hearts; but, above all, I must speak of his charity, that being a duty which the poor too often imagine is only to be performed by the rich.

The body of people called the Poor must not be mistaken for a body of people in absolute want; they are so-called to distinguish them from tradesmen, as they are so called to distinguish them from gentlemen; but the poor, when in health and employment, if honest, sober, and industrious, whether they are labourers, servants, or any other calling which the poor follow, do very well according to their station: but in time of scarcity, sickness, old age, or where there is a very large family, they then are objects of compassion to those

above them, who know it to be their duty to yield them some assistance.

The people in absolute want are those whom either accident or illness hath deprived of the means to get their daily bread, who languish in poverty, and perhaps without any one to give them the necessaries or help which such a state wanteth; those are the objects that the Almighty requireth the poor, who are able, to assist; each neighbour must take their turn to nurse them, to give them a little broth, gruel, or any other thing that the sick can eat or drink, which they have in their power to bestow: they must make their distressed case known, and if they have the laying out of their money, do it with the strictest honesty and the greatest care. If the sick person hath children, it is great charity to give an eye to them, and as often as possible afford them a meal, for it is relieving the unhappy sufferers greatly to know that their children are not without a friend.

These are things which the poor who are in health and employment can very well do; and as they are assured that those who give

to the poor (which meaneth the distressed) lendeth to the Lord, I should imagine they would take every opportunity of performing it.

By doing thus, my dear Children! you may partake of the happiness, in your humble situations, which Job enjoyed in his highest prosperity; for the blessing of those who were ready to perish will come upon you, of the friendless, and of those who had none to help.

### LESSON XXVII.

THE Psalms, my Children, were mostly written by David, who in some of them expresses his high adoration of the attributes of God, that is, of his properties or excellencies, as thus---His Omnipotence, which meaneth his power, and by which he created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that they contain.---His Omnipresence, which meaneth his presence every where.---"Can any, saith the Lord, "hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth?"---His Omni-

science, which meaneth his perfect knowledge of all things both present and to come; as, for instance, he declared (by his prophet Isaiah) two hundred years before it came to pass, that a king of the name of Cyrus would give the Jews permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple of God.---God is also Eternal, which meaneth, that he was without beginning, and is without end.---He is All Good, it being from him that every good and perfect gift proceedeth.---He is All Just, and therefore whatever he hath said that he will do unto man most assuredly he will perform.---He is All Mercy, for his mercy created us, his mercy protecteth us, and it was from his mercy that we received that inestimable gift, his blessed Son, who, after having taught us that religion which we call (from his name) the Christian religion, suffered death upon the cross, and thereby made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world.---Others are prayers and supplications made by David unto God in divers situations and circumstances.---In some he confesseth his

transgressions, and entreateth forgiveness ; ---in others he recounteth his dangers and distresses, imploreh the Almighty's protection, expresseth the firmness of his trust, and declareth his obedience to his holy will. ---Many are hymns of gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving, either for victories obtained, or deliverance from his enemies, or for some other blessing received. ---Others are lessons of instruction, which are equally to be observed by us as by the Jews, they strongly enforcing obedience unto God, the confessing and forsaking of our sins, reliance on his mercy, resignation to his will, a sense of our unworthiness, and grateful acknowledgments of his loving-kindness and tender mercies to his creatures. ---Some are relations of particular circumstances respecting the Israelites ; ---and in some the coming of our blessed Lord is predicted or foretold, the establishment of his kingdom, his sufferings, his descending into hell, and his ascension into heaven.

Remember, my Children, what I have told you, and then you will understand those beautiful compositions of which I have

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now been speaking.--It must be observed that David, throughout his life, was a stranger to despair; for even when under divine correction for offences that he shuddered to reflect on, such was his trust in the mercy of that God whom he adored, that he steadily hoped an heart-felt contrition and a thorough amendment of his ways would be sealed with forgiveness, and his iniquities blotted out.--How wide, then, should Christians keep from despair! who have, if they sincerely repent, and endeavour to do that which is right, the perfect Sun of righteousness pleading for their pardon to the Father of mercy, and whose blood is sufficient to wash out all their misdeeds. But this must never be forgotten, that it is only from unfeigned repentance, an entire amendment of your lives, and an unshaken belief in the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ, that pardon can ever be obtained. Bind these words on your memories, write them on the tablets of your hearts, for it is on your observance of them that the salvation of your souls depend.

## LESSON XXVIII.

THE Book of Proverbs, my Children, which was written by Solomon, opens with Wisdom speaking to mankind.---The advice which she giveth should be seriously attended to, and all her instructions most faithfully followed.---In chapter the ninth, Wisdom is represented as having made a feast, unto which she inviteth every one to come.---This representation is to teach us, that all who desire that wisdom which cometh from above shall obtain it; for neither learning, nor what the world calleth knowledge, is required, but only righteousness:---“ The “ fear of the Lord is the beginning of wis- “ dom; and a good understanding have all “ they who keep his commandments.”--- The remainder of the Book consisteth of wise sayings, which, being in general short, are easily remembered, and contain directions absolutely necessary to be observed by every person, and in every situation.

## LESSON XXIX.

THE Book of Ecclesiastes, my Children, was written by Solomon, wherein he informs us that he had possessed every desirable thing which this world could afford, and proved that without the wisdom which directs to an holy life it was insufficient to make him happy ; and therefore declareth all those things to be vanity. The Wisdom spoken of by Solomon I have already explained, and blessed are those who follow her direction, for it will obtain them favour of the Lord---In this book, as well as in that of Proverbs, are many wise and profitable instructions ; I therefore recommend you frequently to read them, and should you meet with any *part* which you do not understand, by attending to the *whole* it may enable you to do so.

When I was young, having been taught that the soul was immortal, I thought it very strange of Solomon to say,---“ For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts ; for as one dieth, so dieth

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“ the other.”----But upon reading further I found that he said,----“ When the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit shall return to God who gave it ;” and, “ that God would bring all our actions into judgment, with every secret thing, “ whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

This made me plainly discover that it was only of the body which he spake.---I think this method no bad one to be observed in reading of the Scripture; and as I can venture to assure you that those things which are above your understanding will no way endanger your salvation, you need not be uneasy though you should not comprehend them..

### LESSON XXX.

You know, my Children, that the prophets were men who predicted, that is, foretold, things which would come to pass; and that no one could do this who was not inspired, which means, informed, by God.---It was by the mouth of these prophets that the Almighty spake unto the Jews; by

them he promised blessings to the righteous, and by them he threatened to chastise the iniquities of the wicked. By the prophets the Jews were assured of the certain destruction both of the kingdom of Judah and of Israel, unless they repented and turned unto the Lord ; and to bring them to repent was the merciful design of the Almighty in sending his prophets among them. ---By the prophets the coming of our blessed Lord was foretold, and of which his apostles frequently speak ; and our Saviour himself says to his disciples,--“ Search the “ Scriptures, for *they testify of me.*” ---This must mean, read the Old Testament, the New one not having been written till after the death of Jesus Christ. ---I earnestly entreat you to read the prophets often, for without being thoroughly acquainted with them, as well as with the rest of the Old Testament, you cannot understand the New. ---The prophesies are much clearer to us than they could possibly be to the Jews, for though the Jews must have believed (as they were the word of God) that they would be fulfilled, to us it has been proved

that all which respected them *was*, (excepting their conversion, which assuredly *will*) that many which respecteth us *are*, and which must undoubtedly confirm us in the belief that every one *will* be.

The prophet Isaiah, whose book you have just been reading, prophesied many years in Judah, part of which time was in the reign of Hezekiah.----Those predictions which relate both to the captivity and return of the Jews to Jerusalem, you may clearly understand; and if those which relate to the destruction of the Heathen nations do not appear equally plain, yet by frequently reading all the prophets with attention, you will be able to make them out;---as, for instance,----Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, and Isaiah foretold that Babylon should be destroyed by the Medes;--“ Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the “ beauty of Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as “ when God overthrew Sodom and Go-“ morrah.”----This prophecy, which was not completed till two hundred years after it was foretold, sheweth plainly why you have not read of its being fulfilled in

the book of Isaiah, and naturally leads you to conclude that some other prophet will give an account of its accomplishment.--- Those which relate to our blessed Saviour (and of which there are many in Isaiah) will be well understood by all who read the New Testament with application and care. Isaiah saith, "The Spirit of the Lord " God is upon me, he hath anointed me to " preach good tidings unto the meek, he " hath sent me to bind up the broken-heart- " ed, and to proclaim liberty to the cap- " tives."---This is explained in St. Luke;-- " And they delivered unto him (Jesus- " Christ) the book of the prophet Esaias, " and when he opened it he found the " place where it was written, The Spirit of " the Lord is upon me, because he hath a- " nointed me to preach the gospel to the " poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken- " hearted, and to preach deliverance to the " captives."---Thus, by comparing the pro- phesies with the New Testament, you will find them to be very clear.---I purposely omit naming in what chapter the words are of which I speak, in order to make you

look for them, as by so doing you will more closely search the Scriptures.

In this prophet, and likewise in some other parts of Scripture, you meet with this expression,-----“ The Lord hardened their “hearts:”---and though I trust every one’s reason will assure them that the all-just and all-merciful God doth not make man wicked, and then correct him for being so, yet, to put it out of the power of the most ignorant among you to think that it is possible, observe what I am going to say :---The Almighty hath set before you good and evil; if you are good, he hath promised you everlasting happiness, and assured you that he will give you his grace, which will enable you to be good, provided that you ask it with sincerity and trust:---If you are wicked, and do not turn from your iniquities, and truly repent of your offences, he hath said that misery shall be your portion.---But though the Almighty foreknoweth what every one will do, he doth not oblige you to be either righteous or wicked; for he hath left that to your own choice.---This plainly sheweth that the Almighty never

hardens man's heart; but by pursuing a wicked course of life, he rejecteth divine grace, and thereby hardeneth his own; and the express meaning of the Lord's hardening his heart is, that he with-holdeth that grace which he would not receive.---Yet, as the Almighty had rather that man should save his soul alive, (that is, that he should live to everlasting happiness instead of misery) he will, for the sake of his blessed Son, hear the supplications of the penitent, restore him to his favour, and again bless him with his grace, if devoutly implored.

### LESSON XXXI.

**J**EREMIAH, my Children, was called by God to be a prophet in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, and continued to prophesy until the destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah, fearing that he was too young and inexperienced to be a prophet, expressed his diffidence, by calling himself a child; but though modesty, which always accompanies the good and wise, causes them to be humble, yet it never impresses with fear, and

therefore to whatever undertaking their duty directs, they engage in it with courage, though not with presumption. Thus Jeremiah, when commanded by God, entered upon the offices of priest and prophet with equal humility and resolution.

The destruction of the Jews,---their return from captivity,---and also the ruin of Babylon, was foretold by Jeremiah, as they had been by Isaiah; but though the Almighty continued to send his prophets among them, their hearts were so hardened by their iniquities, that they gave no credence to their words:---“Shall I not visit for these things? “saith the Lord; and shall not my soul be “avenged on such a nation as this?”

The repeated assurance given by Jeremiah of the certain destruction of Jerusalem for the iniquities of the people so highly incensed the nobles, who did not chuse to have their sins called to remembrance, and the approaching correction of them sounded in their ears, that they represented the prophet unto the king as a wicked and dangerous person, alledging that he secretly espoused the interest of the Chalde-

ans, and by dispiriting the people, rendered them incapable of defending the kingdom. Zedekiah, experiencing all those apprehensions which the man who hath not God for his safety will ever be encompassed with, tamely gave up Jeremiah, though his future behaviour evidently proves that it was cowardice, not justice, which made him comply.---By order of the nobles Jeremiah was cast into a dungeon, and which being full of mire, he must shortly have perished, had not Ebedmelech, an Ethiopian, who was a principal servant about the King, obtained permission of his master to deliver him.---As soon as Jeremiah was released, he undauntedly repeated those predictions unto the king which had drawn on his late calamity; for he knew it to be the duty of his office, and therefore nothing could deter him from the performance.

You must observe, my Children, that the mercy of a stranger delivered Jeremiah from the dungeon into which he had been thrown by the cruelty of his countrymen, and from which you must learn always to behave with humanity to strangers; for although

it is both natural and right to love your own countrymen best, it is exceedingly wrong to be cruel to those of any other nation. The vulgar think that they cannot love their own country without hating every other, and frequently insult a foreigner, nay even a Scotch or an Irish man, for no other offence than that he was not born in England. This is one of the hundred faults which those people are continually guilty of; but why are they vulgar? it is impossible that they should be so if they were not wicked. Let no one imagine that the poor must of course be vulgar, for it is only the wicked poor who are so. Whenever a gentleman or lady speaketh of a poor good man or woman, they always call them decent well-behaved people.---The vulgar constantly plead for their excuse that they have not such learning as gentlefolks.--- This is very true; but learning teaches those things which the poor have nothing to do with; it is religion that teaches them behaviour; there never was a poor man who practised his duty to God, and to his neighbour, but what was very well behaved:--

he knows that he is forbidden to fwear, or to take the name of the Lord our God in vain, and therefore he will not do it:---he knows that he should order himself lowly and reverently to his betters, and depend upon it he will:---he knows that he is forbidden to hurt another either by word or deed, and therefore he will not vex the stranger who sojourneth in his land:---he knows that he is ordered to keep his tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and flandering, and therefore he will not lie, backbite, slander, nor speak evil of another:---he knows that he should do unto all as he would they should do unto him, therefore he will be civil to all, friendly where he can, ready to teach others any right thing which he knoweth, and to warn them of the danger of committing any wrong one. Thus you may plainly understand that it is by no means necessary to be vulgar because you are poor; and those poor who are do not imagine how much they lose, even in this world, by being so; for the good, who are just in all their ways, think it as wrong to encourage the wicked as they know it to be right to relieve the deserving.

## LESSON XXXII.

EZEKIEL, my Children, was among the number of those Jews who were carried into captivity with Jehoiakim, which happened a few years before the absolute destruction of Jerusalem. We read that it was in the fifth year of their captivity that Ezekiel was called by God to the prophetical office, which shews that he still continued his merciful kindness to the Jews, by giving them a prophet to exhort them to repent of their past offences, and to instruct them in the way of the Lord whom they had so long forsaken, and save their souls alive.

..... "Have I any pleasure that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God, and that he should not turn from his evil ways and live? If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; his transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him, in his righteousness he shall

“ live.---If the righteous turneth away from  
“ his righteousness, and committeth ini-  
“ quity, and doeth according to all the abo-  
“ minations that the wicked man doeth,  
“ shall he live? his righteousness shall not  
“ be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath  
“ trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sin-  
“ ned, in them shall he die:---yet faith the  
“ house of Israel, The way of the Lord is  
“ not equal.”

Ezekiel foretold in Chaldea all those things which Jeremiah was foretelling in Jerusalem, and mentioned the very day on which the siege of Jerusalem began; a striking proof that the prophets were informed by God.

You must observe that a **vision** is a representation, and therefore the same as a type; as thus,---in the vision of Ezekiel, where the Almighty sheweth him a valley of dead bones, which were reunited, covered with flesh, and again raised to life, is a representation of the general resurrection.

Many of the visions are sufficiently explained over the chapters which contain them, to enable an attentive reader to un-

derstand; nevertheless, if there should be any which you cannot comprehend, it is not material, as they were prophecies respecting the Jews.

### LESSON XXXIII.

**D**ANIEL, my Children, was carried captive to Babylon with Jehoiakim, at which time you must remember part of the sacred vessels of the house of God were taken, and by order of Nebuchadnezzar placed in the treasure-house of his god.

The king having commanded some of the most sensible and learned of the Jews to be brought to his palace, and instructed in the language of the Chaldeans, Daniel, Hananiel, Mishael, and Azariah were chosen, unto whom he appointed a daily provision of the meat and wine that were used by the Chaldeans. Daniel, knowing that it was not lawful for a Jew to partake of some of those animals which were ate by the Babylonians, requested permission that he and his three friends might live upon pulse and water.

If these four young men, my Children,

had thought (as every one doth who hath not that wisdom which attends the fear of the Lord) that, as they were at Babylon, they must do as those did at Babylon, they would have been utterly ruined; for it was for their faithful observance of their duty that the Almighty blessed them with those uncommon understandings which raised them so high in the favour of the king.---Wherever you are, remember that your God is present; be punctual in the performance of your duty, and then neither fear, nor the mistaken expectation of either advantage or pleasure, will ever have power to make you do wrong. There are in every situation many and strong temptations to vice, but there are more and stronger invitations to virtue; add to these the certain rewards that await the righteous, and the equally certain punishments that await the unrepenting guilty. Remember that the deceiver, Vice, always puts on the appearance of pleasure; but the way to discover the deceit is to carefully examine whether it produces it, and this must be done by considering those who have for some time pursued the paths

of vice : watch them closely, and you will discover that they are uneasy in their minds, or distressed in their circumstances, or injured in their healths ; that they are driven to a thousand shifts that a man who is not linked to some vice is wholly a stranger ; that even in a situation which claimeth compassion, (and in which a good man would meet with relief) their vice is esteemed a just reason for with-holding it,---“ I will “ not,” say the good, “ give assistance to a “ drunkard---a gambler---or whatever his “ vice may be, for by so doing I should en-“ able him to sin on ;--there are objects who “ are worthy, and those are the objects whom “ I will relieve.”----You will likewise dis-  
cover that the wicked, when in distress, are wholly forsaken by their sworn brothers in vice: they have by their evil examples and persuasions robbed them of their virtue, their money, their good name, and peace of mind ; and being destitute of every support, they shun them as the pestilence, nor take warning by their fate, but pursue their evil course till iniquity cuts them off.

Nebuchadnezzar having had a dream

which exceedingly disturbed his peace, and of which none of his astrologers could even pretend an explanation, he having forgotten what it was, Daniel related it unto him, and then gave its interpretation; at which the king being greatly astonished and pleased, said unto Daniel, “ Of a truth it is that “ your God is a God of gods, a Lord of “ kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing “ that thou couldest reveal this secret.”

Daniel received from the king many noble marks of his favour; he appointed him governor of all the province of Babylon; and, in compliance with his request, raised his three Hebrew friends to considerable employments.

Nebuchadnezzar, having ordered a golden image to be erected, and commanded that every person should fall down and worship it, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refused to obey, and for which they were cast into a fiery furnace; but though it was heated seven degrees more than it ever had been, they came out from the fire unhurt. Thus these men, by having steadily performed their duty, were so thoroughly assu-

red that their God would support them, that they entered the furnace with unshaken resolution, and magnified the Lord in the sight of the Heathen. “Blessed be the “God,” said Nebuchadnezzar, “of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath “sent his angel, and delivered his servants “who trusted in him, and yielded their bodies that they might not worship any god “except their own God; therefore I make “a decree, That every people, nation, and “language, which speak any thing against “the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed- “nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their “houses shall be made a dunghill, because “there is none other God that can deliver “after this sort.”

Nebuchadnezzar, having a second extraordinary dream, demanded of Daniel its interpretation; who, after informing him of the Almighty’s design, recommended him to humble himself before God, the director of all events, by forsaking his sins, living unto righteousness, and treating the distressed with merciful kindness.

It plainly appeareth that the king did not

attend to the advice of Daniel, because he was visited with the afflictions foretold in the instant that he was exulting in his pride and vain glory.----"Is not this," said he, "great Babylon, that I have built by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"--However, though the counsel of so wise and good a man as Daniel could not soften the proud heart of Nebuchadnezzar, yet the rod of affliction effected it, and he humbly acknowledged that all the inhabitants of the earth were as nothing; "That the Lord did according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" and that "none could stay his hand, or say unto him, 'What doest thou? He lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and blessed the Most High, giving praises and honour unto him who liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and whose kingdom is from generation to generation."

The grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, having made a great entertainment, ordered the sacred vessels to be brought and filled with wine, which he and his compa-

ny drank to the praises and honour of their idols. While they were thus impiously engaged, the Almighty caused an hand to appear on the wall, which wrote some character that no one of the king's astrologers could explain ; whereupon Daniel was sent for, who informed him, that as the chastisement which Nebuchadnezzar had suffered for his abominable pride and impiety had not proved a lesson of instruction to him, but on the contrary, having dared to profane those sacred vessels which had been dedicated to the living God, his kingdom was given to the Medes and Persians. This was accomplished on the very night in which also Belshazzar was slain.---And thus the prophesy of Iisaiah was fulfilled.

Daniel was held in equal esteem by Darius the new king, and the honours conferred on him by that prince created him many powerful enemies ; but his conduct being so thoroughly unblamable, they could not find any occasion of complaint, and therefore wickedly contrived a scheme that they hoped would affect his ruin.----They prevailed on the king to sign a decree that

whosoever should ask a petition of any god or man except himself, for thirty days, should be cast into the den of lions.

Daniel, according to his wonted custom, retired to his chamber, and kneeling at the window which looked towards Jerusalem, sent up his petitions, and offered his thanksgivings unto God ; of which his enemies acquainting the king, he was cast into the den, and the door of it sealed with the royal signet.

The king, who now discovered the malice of Daniel's foes, passed a most dreadful night, and going early in the morning to the den, called, " O Daniel, servant of the living God ! is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions ?" To which Daniel replied, " My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me, forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me ;---and also before thee, O King ! have I done no hurt."---The king then commanded Daniel to be taken out of the den, and his base accusers put into it,

who were immediately destroyed by the lions.

Then Darius made a decree, That the God of Daniel should be feared throughout his kingdom, declaring him to be the living God, “whose kingdom was *that* which shall not be destroyed, and whose dominion endureth for ever; who worketh signs and wonders in heaven, and on earth; and who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Daniel expressly speaketh of the coming of the Meffiah, of his suffering death for others, (that is, his offering up his life to God for our transgressions) and of his establishing the Covenant between God and man.

### LESSON XXXIV.

**H**OSEA, my Children, and the eleven prophets which follow, are called the Minor, or Lesser Prophets, which distinguish them from the four greater, namely, Iсаiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

These repeated messengers of tender com-

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passion from God unto the Jews, who each laboured incessantly to bring them to repentance, to pardon, and to safety, were all of them neglected, and many ill treated; but as nothing could deter them from the performance of their duty, they continued to exhort, to threaten, and to use every possible method of saving them from ruin; nevertheless their pious endeavours proved ineffectual, and some of them experienced the misery of beholding that heavy correction which they had most unwearily endeavoured to prevent.

How deeply, my Children, must the hearts of the faithful ministers of God be afflicted, when, after unremitting diligence to lead in the paths of righteousness those of whom their holy office hath given them charge, they fall into sin and disobedience! how often may be the times, when they are privately petitioning the Almighty to bless and preserve their flock, that many of them are engaged in breaking his sacred laws! Believe me it is not themselves alone that the wicked cause to suffer, for every good heart is pained at the judgment which the guilty draw on their own heads; and there is

not a criminal who receives the punishment due to his crime who doth not create concern in the breast of the righteous.

You must understand, my Children, that the adultery spoken of by Hosea is a figure or representation of the unfaithfulness of Israel to God, for they went astray after idols, and forsook the Lord, unto whom alone they belonged.----“ My people,” faith the Lord, “ are destroyed for want of knowledge ; “ (meaning knowledge of their duty) Seeing “ they have forsaken the law of God, I will “ also forget them. They sacrifice upon the “ tops of the mountains, and burn incense “ upon the hills under oaks, poplars, and “ elms; therefore their daughters shall com- “ mit whoredom, and their spouses shall “ commit adultery.” This meaneth idolatry ; for having withdrawn their duty and affection from God, who had united them to himself, he threateneth to cast them off, and leave them to pursue their adulterous worship.--But, faith the Lord, “ Though Israel “ play the harlot, let not Judah offend; come “ not unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth- “ aven, Ephraim is joined to idols, let him “ alone.”

Joel likewise speaketh of the approaching visitations of Israel, under the representations of vermin, fire, drought, and famine.

---The advice given by this prophet to the Jews, to instantly endeavour to turn away the wrath of an offended God, is of equal importance for us to observe as for them; ---“ Turn ye to me, saith the Lord, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful.”

Joel foretold that the Lord would send the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and Saint Peter repeated his words immediately upon the apostles' receiving the Holy Ghost.

Amos foretold the ruin of divers other nations besides those of Judah and Israel, and all his predictions came to pass.---This prophet likewise strongly exhorted the Jews to repentance; ---“ Seek ye the Lord,” said he “ and ye shall live; hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate; it may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious unto you.” ---But

not all the entreaties to repentance, nor the judgments of God so perpetually denounced against them, ever appear to have made the least impression.

I request you, my Children, to frequently read, with the steadiest attention, the eighth chapter of Amos; remember you are reading the words of God, and observe that he hath sworn he will not suffer the offences there mentioned to go unpunished.

May our gratitude and thankfulness for the high blessing of enjoying the word of God be such as is acceptable unto him; and may his infinite mercy so direct our hearts, as never to draw on that judgment, terrible to think of, which is mentioned by Amos,----a famine of hearing the word of God. This prophet foretold the establishment of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the calling of the Gentiles, and of which St. James speaks in the Acts of the Apostles. The dissolution of Edom, which was predicted both by Joel and Amos, was also predicted by Obadiah, who expressly declares that the wrath of God would fall upon them for their violence against their brother Ja-

acob;—the meaning of which is, that the Israelites were descended from Jacob, and the Edomites were descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob, and therefore the Edomites and the Israelites were brethren. The bitter afflictions of the Israelites were such as the enormity of their offences deserved, but the knowing that they merited these corrections was reason sufficient to overwhelm their brethren with the deepest concern; however, it appeareth that the Edomites, so far from feeling sorrow for Israel, joined with their enemies, and for which the Almighty most severely punished them.—“As thou hast *done*, it shall be “*done unto thee*; thy deeds shall return upon thine own head, saith the Lord.”

This prophet not only foretold that the Jews would return from their captivity, but likewise that they would enjoy part of the country of Edom; and all his prophecies were accomplished, for Edom was destroyed by the Chaldeans, the Jews returned from captivity, and a portion of the land of the Edomites was by them possessed.

**LESSON XXXV.**

THE prophet Jonah, my Children, being commanded by God to go to Nineveh (the capital of Affyria) and reprove the iniquities of the inhabitants, and preach unto them repentance, had not sufficient resolution (it being a strange or Heathen nation) to obey, and therefore he embarked on board a ship intending to go to Tarshish, and flee from the presence of the Lord.

Nothing, my Children, but fear, which will almost deprive us of reason, could have persuaded the weakest of mankind that it was possible to fly from God; but whoever entertains fear harboureth an enemy in their bosom that will incapacitate them for most of the duties of life.

A violent storm overtaking the ship which Jonah was on board, the mariners agreed to cast lots, in order to discover for whose offence it was sent; and the lot falling upon Jonah, he was thrown into the sea, but by the power of the Almighty was swallowed by a whale, and after remaining within it three days was cast up unhurt.

The corrections of God, my Children, to those who have not wholly forsaken, tho' unhappily strayed from, their duty, are always interwoven with mercy, and which he is sometimes pleased to make visible, in order to strengthen this belief. Of the many gracious proofs afforded us Jonah is a striking one, whose preservation is shewn to have been contained in his correction, *that having led him to repent of his fault.*

As I explained to you the meaning of a type, both in Isaac, and likewise in the brazen serpent, I shall not again repeat it, but inform you that Jonah was a type of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which we are expressly taught by himself.—“As “Jonah,” saith our blessed Lord, “was “three days and three nights in the whale’s “belly, so the Son of man shall be three “days and three nights in the heart of the “earth.”

Jonah now going to Nineveh, and declaring unto the people that the Almighty would destroy the city within forty days, they immediately began the great work of repentance by fasting, humiliation, and

thorough contrition, averting the anger of God by so doing, who beheld the sincerity of their repentance, and mercifully forgave.

Jonah being apprehensive that the sparing of the city might occasion him to be deemed a false prophet, could not conceal his uneasiness, and in the language of discontent wished rather to die than be so thought. This failing, which his reason and religion should have conquered, was equally an enemy to his virtue and felicity ; but for that his heart would have expanded with joy, and poured forth its thanksgiving to the all-merciful God who had spared the lives of thousands.

If a dissatisfied temper, my Children, is not the greatest, it is by no means the least, of faults ; for whoever possesseth it disturbeth the peace of others, and destroyeth their own : it operates differently upon different persons, but though the branches appear separete, they spring from the same root : many are those whom it maketh lazy cowards, by casting out hope, and taking in despair. They tell you that they were born to be unfortunate, and that it is vain to

strive, for they know that luck is against them. Thus they creep from house to house lamenting their hard fate, and oft-times ready to perish, while every field invites them to labour and to eat ; but they cannot go forth, for there is a lion in the way.

There are others who are truly industrious, and possess many valuable qualities, but by suffering discontent to prevail, which ought to have been crushed in its beginning, it is daily counteracting that happiness which otherwise those qualities might have yielded. One hath a better situation, another better health, and a third better success, in their undertaking, either of which is sufficient to draw a sigh from the bottom of their heart, and a melancholy declaration, that every one's merit is not equally rewarded. Such a person is by no means free from envy, though they do not possess it in its worst degree, since they could bear to see Mordecai sitting at the king's gate, provided that they were but seated there also.

Remember, my Children, that you were born to labour, and therefore enter upon

your task with cheerfulness, and a firm trust in God. The world is open before you ;--- if one undertaking faileth, try another ; and if that should not do, try a third ; and so on, till you succeed. Never despair, nay, never be disheartened ; let not disappointment weaken your resolution, for it is impossible to tell you what resolution can perform when it is exercised in a cause that is just. You know that the Almighty will behold your honest endeavours, and that he never forsaketh those who do not forsake him ; but if you are dissatisfied because that another doth better, though the Almighty may bless, yet you cannot be happy. I will relate to you a story of two shoemakers, both men of exceeding good characters, who lived in the parish where I was born, and if you make the same use of it that I have endeavoured to do, you will be able to say, with truth, when you hear of a neighbour's good success, that you are heartily glad they do so well. Upon the death of the clerk, both these men endeavoured to succeed him ;---the name of the successful one was Richard, and the other's John. Richard's

good fortune proved the cause of much uneasiness to John ; he did well in his business, and till then was very happy, but he had got hold of an idle saying, " That it was " better to be born fortunate than rich ; " adding, that he never knew how unlucky " he was till he tried." -- The clergyman, whom the ancient loved as a brother, and the young reverenced and observed as a father, was exceedingly concerned when he heard of John's uneasiness, and took an early opportunity of calling upon him. -- " John," said he, " should you be very " much troubled if I was to be made a bi- " shop ? " -- " Troubled, Sir," said John, " it " would rejoice my very heart, for I wish " you as well and as happy as any one man " can wish himself." -- " I thank you," said the clergyman ; " and to endeavour to make " you happy is the business which hath " brought me here. I am told that you " are rather uneasy at Richard's being made " clerk." -- " And very well I may, Sir," said John, " for I know myself to be his " equal in every thing ; I am as honest, as " sober, as good a liver, and as good a shoe.

“ maker.”--“And so I really think you are,”  
“ said the clergyman; “ it is the opinion  
“ that I have long entertained of you; but,  
“ my Friend, we must likewise acknow-  
“ ledge that Richard is as honest, as sober,  
“ and as good a liver, as you, and it was  
“ not possible for both to be made clerk.  
“ You say that it would rejoice your heart  
“ if I was to be preferred; and why should  
“ it not rejoice your heart that Richard is?  
“ I well know the rock on which you have  
“ split, for it hath been fatal to the peace of  
“ thousands; Richard was your equal, and  
“ the advancement of an equal is what  
“ numbers have not virtue enough to bear:  
“ however a superior may be raised it gi-  
“ veth them no pain, but the place that is  
“ occupied by an equal vanity tells them  
“ they could equally well have filled: but  
“ vanity, John, is a weed that we must not  
“ suffer to grow, for it will poison all our  
“ virtues. A worthy man may possess some  
“ quality which, in the station God hath  
“ placed him, may enable him to be ser-  
“ viceable to others, and often bring home  
“ a little joy to his heart; planted by his

“ God, like a tree by the water, he putteth  
“ forth his fruit, and his leaf doth not wi-  
“ ther: whereas, were he placed in the sta-  
“ tion that he wishes, that quality might be  
“ useless, and the happiness it yielded cut off;  
“ for tho’ every virtue is required in every  
“ situation, yet there are qualities which  
“ are wanted but in some. On the other  
“ hand, he may have some deficiency, or  
“ some infirmity, which the care of our all-  
“ wise Disposer hath prevented from being  
“ any disadvantage in the state he hath called  
“ him to; and yet it might prove a bar to  
“ his success, and the source of much secret  
“ sorrow in that which he earnestly covet-  
“ eth. These are remedies that we must  
“ call in when dissatisfied, and they will  
“ calm our restless desires. I will mention  
“ a thing that hath never been of any detri-  
“ ment to you, which yet would have pro-  
“ ved a very great one had you obtained  
“ your desire.---You stammer a little.”---  
“ Ay, and very little, too, Sir,” said John;  
“ for I never stammer when I sing, other-  
“ wise I should not have wished to be the  
“ clerk.”---“ This,” said the clergyman,

“ is the case of too many ; knowing them-  
“ selves qualified for a part, they idly con-  
“ clude that they are so for the whole: you  
“ forget that the clerk must read as well as  
“ sing, and you would have found it much  
“ more difficult to read than to sing with-  
“ out stammering. Suppose you made the  
“ trial ; read out a psalm to me as loud and  
“ as distinctly as you intended to have read  
“ it had you been the clerk.”---To which  
John consented ; and he read four verses  
exceedingly well, but meeting with a word  
in the fifth at which he hesitated, he began  
the psalm again, and though he did so four  
several times, he never could pronounce  
that word. This made him recollect that  
whenever he had stammered at a word he  
could not recover himself, yet perhaps in  
an hour or two after he has spoken it as  
plainly as I could....John, being now con-  
vinced that he would not have been fit for  
a clerk, honestly acknowledged it to the  
clergyman, unto whom he returned many  
grateful thanks, saying, “ If I was sure, good  
“ Sir ! that we should not lose you by the  
“ bargain, I would pray for your being  
“ made a bishop indeed.”

## LESSON XXXVI.

MICAH, my Children, prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, Samaria, and likewise many other cities, all of which were fulfilled.---He declareth that all nations should know and worship the living God, the accomplishment of which was by the conversion of the Gentiles.---He foretold that the Messiah would come out of Bethlehem, and we read in Saint Matthew, that when Herod demanded where Christ should be born? he was answered, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet;--- And thou, Bethlehem, art not the least of the princes in the land of Juda, for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel."

Micah describeth Religion lamenting the extreme pitch of wickedness to which the Jews were arrived, by saying,--"The good man is perished out of the earth; the best of them is a brier;---the most upright is sharper than a thorn-hedge.---Trust ye not a friend;---put ye not confidence in

“ a guide.---The son dishonoureth the fa-  
“ ther, and the daughter rises up against  
“ her mother.----But I will look unto the  
“ Lord, I will wait for the God of my sal-  
“ vation. Who is like unto him? he par-  
“ doneth iniquity, and retaineth not his  
“ anger for ever, because he delighteth in  
“ mercy.”---Ponder these words, my Chil-  
dren, in your hearts, and remember that  
the unfeignedly penitent will, for the sake  
of the blessed Sun of righteousness, obtain  
forgiveness of the God of mercy.

Habakkuk, who prophesied near to the dissolution of Jerusalem, lamented the exceeding wickedness of the people, who were drawing on swiftly their own destruction. He represents the pride and cruelty of their approaching scourge the Chaldeans, and acknowledgeth them an instrument of correction in the hand of the Most High, unto whom he earnestly and humbly prayed for protection against an enemy who impiously ascribed their success to the power of their idols; and the Almighty assured the prophet, that in due time his anger would fall on the Babylonians for their

cruelty, their pride, and their idolatry ;---saying, “ That as they had spoiled many nations, the remnant of his people should spoil them.”

This, my Children, clearly shows that the success of the wicked is not the blessing of prosperity ; the Lord giveth victory to their arm, in order to execute his judgments upon those whose iniquities have called them forth ; but this being done, he convinceth the wicked that he is of purer justice than to bless the unrighteous, by turning his direful vengeance on their guilty head. “ Woe to him, saith the Lord, “ who buildeth a town with blood, and “ establisheth a city by iniquity ; for the “ stone shall cry out of the wall, and the “ beam out of the timber shall answere it. “ Woe to him who coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his “ nest on high, and that he may be delivered “ ed from the power of evil.”

The prayer, or rather hymn, of Habakkuk, is an exalted description of the power and glorious majesty of the Godhead. Read it often, my Children, for it striketh the

heart with reverential awe, and leads to silent adoration of the omnipotence of Jehovah.---The prophet concludeth his hymn with a declaration of his unchangeable love of God, and his immoveable trust in his mercy.---“ Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, “ the labour of the olive shall fail, and the “ fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall “ be cut off from the fold, and there shall “ be no herd in the stalls, yet I will re-“ joice in the Lord, I will joy in the God “ of my salvation.”

Zephaniah, who prophesied in the days of Josiah, represented unto the Jews the dreadful calamities that awaited their impiety, and strongly exhorted them to repent, before the fierce anger of the Lord came upon them. The prophet recommended those who happily were not lost to the sense of their duty to offer up their prayers and supplications unto God, knowing that he boweth down his ear to the petitions of his faithful servants, and only denies when it is most for their happiness.---“ Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the

“ earth who have wrought his judgments;  
“ seek righteousness, seek meekness, it may  
“ be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s  
“ anger.” There was not, nor ever can be,  
any danger of the Almighty’s forsaking the  
good, but they know it to be their duty,  
and fail not to perform it, to entreat the  
Lord for the offending multitude; and it  
is for the sake of the righteous few when  
the Almighty deferreth to execute judg-  
ment on a guilty land.

Both Zephaniah and Nahum predicted  
the total dissolution of Nineveh; and tho'  
it was, at the time of their predictions, in  
the highest glory, being the capital of the  
first empire in the world, yet their pro-  
phesies were strictly fulfilled. Some years  
before the Ninevites, at the preaching of  
the prophet Jonah, had humbled them-  
selves before God, and been forgiven; but  
forgetting the mercy they had received,  
and returning to oppression, cruelty, and  
idolatry, they provoked the arm of God to  
lay them low in the dust. Nineveh, the re-  
joicing city, that dwelt carelessly, that said  
in her heart “ I AM, and there is none be-

“ side me !”...became a desolation ! a place for beasts to lie down in ! and every one who passed by her hissed and wagged their hand.

### LESSON XXXVII.

**H**AGGAI, my Children, prophesied unto the Jews after their return from captivity, and the reproof which he giveth them for devoting their thoughts and applications to the building and making themselves comfortable houses, while they neglected to rebuild the Temple of God, shews that our first and chief concern should be the performance of our duty.---It is undoubtedly right to enjoy every good which the tender love of our heavenly Father bestows, but it is not enjoying, but abusing, his blessings, if we suffer them so to engross our time and affections as to make us neglect our gratitude and obedience to the divine Giver. If we do not make religion the foundation of our happiness, we cannot have any reason to hope for its continuance ; and the knowledge which every one very soon

acquires of the uncertainty of all things in this mortal state, must keep us in perpetual apprehension of losing it; whereas if we live in obedience to his will who is the disposer of every event, we shall always feel assured that whatever changes may come to pass, he will direct them to prove most for our good; fear will not abate the joy of prosperity, neither can adversity drive us to despair. The wife, that is, the righteous, man's house, notwithstanding the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat violently upon it, did not fall, because it was founded upon a rock.

It is with pleasure, my Children, that I bid you observe the proper behaviour of the Jews to their instructor, for they received his reproof with attention, and under the direction of Zerubbabel and Jeshua began with true diligence the work which he exhorted them to perform. You all, I hope, remember that it was the presence of the blessed Son of God which made the glory of the latter house greater than that of the former, and Haggai's foretelling it so long before it came to pass, evidently proves that his knowledge was from God.

Zechariah, who prophesied about the same time, gave the Jews this comfortable assurance, That if they turned unto the Lord, he would mercifully turn unto them.

“ I, saith the Lord, will be unto Jerusalem  
“ a wall of fire round about, and will be  
“ the glory in the midst of her.” Again,  
“ Have I thought in these days to do well  
“ unto Jerusalem, and to the house of Ju-  
“ dah; fear ye not. These are the things  
“ that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the  
“ truth, execute the judgment of truth  
“ and peace in your gates. Let none of you  
“ imagine evil in your hearts against your  
“ neighbour, and love no false oath, for  
“ these are things that I hate, saith the  
“ Lord.”

Zechariah thus foretelleth our Saviour’s entry into Jerusalem; “ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee, he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” ---By this prophet, likewise, was foretold the price for which our blessed Lord was betrayed.-----

I said unto them, "If ye think good give me  
" my price ; so they weighed for my price  
" thirty pieces of silver; and I took the thirty  
" pieces and cast them to the potter in the  
" house of the Lord."----This was accom-  
plished by Judas's covenanting with the  
high priests to betray our Lord for thirty  
pieces of silver, which he afterwards cast  
down in the Temple, and with which the  
priests purchased the Potter's Field.

The prophet Malachi was likewise sent  
unto the Jews upon their return from cap-  
tivity, who exhorted them to forsake all  
their iniquities, and live in obedience to  
the law of God.---He foretold the coming  
of our blessed Saviour, of John the Baptist,  
and also of the establishment of the gospel.

Observe, my Children, that there is a  
book of remembrance written before the  
Lord, of all our good and evil doings, and  
that the Lord of Hosts hath said,---" Those  
" who obey me faithfully shall be mine; and  
" in the day when I make up my jewels I  
" will spare them, as a man spareth his own  
" son who serveth him."

### LESSON XXXVIII.

IN the Book of Tobit, my Children, is related the history of a Jew of the tribe of Nephthalim, whom neither the example of the multitude nor the threatenings of the mighty could turn aside from following the law of his God ; for we read that while Tobit lived in his own country, he alone of all his tribe refused to sacrifice unto Baal, and continued to obey, with steadiness, those commands which God Almighty had ordered to be observed by the whole Jewish nation.---When the Jews were punished for their disobedience by a long captivity in the land of Affyria, the righteousness of Tobit was remembered by the Almighty, who gave him grace and favour before Enemessar, king of that country, and thus enabled him to feed his hungry brethren, and to clothe those who were naked ; and (in obedience to a divine command which the Jews were strictly enjoined to observe) he buried those of his nation whose dead bodies were cast about the walls of Nineveh.

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Enemefar was succeeded on the throne of Assyria by his son Sennacherib, who was so highly displeased with Tobit for the kindness which he had shewn to his brethren the Jews, that he gave command to take away all his goods, and to put him to death; but as the prosperity so also the power of the unjust is of short duration, for Sennacherib was killed by two of his sons, and their brother Sarchedonus obtained possession of the kingdom.

Tobit, who had fled from Nineveh to avoid the rage of Sennacherib, returned when he heard that the king was dead, and continued to perform those acts of piety and benevolence which had secured to him the divine protection and favour.----Tobit had an only son named Tobias, whom he taught to obey the commands of God both by instruction and by the best method of enforcing instruction, namely,---a good example.---Tobias undertook a journey to Media, for the purpose of settling some affairs with which his father had entrusted him, and on this occasion the piety of Tobit was again highly rewarded, for the Al-

mighty sent an angel to accompany Tobias, who, altho' ignorant of this mark of the divine favour, well knew that it was his duty to follow the wise counsels of a friend who had been recommended and approved by a pious and affectionate parent. Guided by the directions of the angel, (who had taken the name of Azarias) Tobias was successful in all his undertakings, particularly with respect to his marriage, and in recovering his father from a blindness which had for some time afflicted him.-----Always, my Children, bear in your thoughts that your parents gave you being, that they nursed you in their arms while helpless babes, and watched your growing age with a thousand anxious fears ; that it is owing to their tender care you are arrived at man's or woman's estate, and when years hath brought them to a second childhood, it is then your turn to be the nurse and protector of their helpless days. Nature from the beginning of the world taught her children this pleasing duty, and the happiest hours of Joseph's good fortune were those in which he cherished his dear old father: all his prospe-

rity and grandeur doth not appear to have created pride in his good heart; but when he shewed his venerable parent to his royal master he seemeth to have felt not a little, saying unto him, "Behold my father!"— After the death of Tobit, Tobias settled at Ecbatane in Media, where he heard of the total destruction of Nineveh, as it had been foretold by the prophets Nahum and Zephaniah.

## LESSON XXXIX.

You have read, in the history of Judith, my Children, that Nabuchodonosor, King of Assyria, being highly offended with the Jews, and likewise some of the idolatrous nations, for having refused to assist him in his war with Arphaxad King of Media, sent a vast army, under the command of Holofernes, against them.

We read that Holofernes had decreed to destroy all the gods of the land, in order that every nation should worship Nabuchodonosor only, and call upon him as their god.

When the general drew nigh to Judea, the Israelites, who had heard in what manner he had spoiled the temples of those idolatrous nations which he had subdued, were exceedingly alarmed for the Temple of the living God, and made every preparation in their power to defend themselves. Joacim the high priest wrote to the inhabitants of Bethulia to guard the narrow passages near to that city, through which the enemy might otherwise gain admittance into Judea.

You must here observe, that not only the men and women of Israel, but all the little children, in the humblest and most fervent manner, implored the protection of their heavenly Father; and I make no doubt if they were good children, having kept God's holy will and commandments, but that their innocent petitions helped to preserve their country from destruction.

Holofernes having desired some information concerning the Jews, received from Achior a short history of them, who concluded his account with this remark, "That "when they sinned not before God they

“ prospered, because the God who hateth  
“ iniquity was with them ; but whenever  
“ they departed from his commands, then  
“ they were overcome by their enemies....  
“ Now,” said he, “ if there be any error in  
“ this people, if they have sinned against  
“ their God, let us consider that this shall  
“ be their ruin, and we shall overcome  
“ them ; but if there be no iniquity in their  
“ nation, let us pass by them, lest their God  
“ be their defender, and we become a re-  
“ proach before all the world.” These  
words of Achior being highly displeasing  
to Holofernes, he commanded his servants  
to carry him to Bethulia, saying, that he  
should there fall with its inhabitants, whom  
he threatened to destroy as one man.

Holofernes having besieged Bethulia, it  
was proposed unto him to secure their only  
fountain of water, by doing which, if it did  
not oblige them to surrender, they must cer-  
tainly perish of thirst.--This being done, the  
Bethulians were soon driven to the greatest  
distress, which made them assemble before  
Ozias, and demand to be delivered up to  
the enemy rather than behold their wives

and children perish.---Ozias exhorted them to have courage, to put their trust in God, and to endure, with patience, five days more, in which time they might possibly be relieved; but if they were not, he would then comply with their request.

There dwelt in Bethulia a widow of great possessions named Judith, whose exceeding piety and wisdom were respected by every one. This promise of Ozias being made known to her, she said unto him and the other governors of the city, "Provoke not the Lord our God to anger; for if he will not help us within these five days, he hath power to defend us when he will, even every day, or to destroy us before our enemies. Do not bind the counsels of the Lord our God, for God is not as man that he may be threatened, neither as the son of man that he should be wavering; therefore let us wait for salvation of him, calling upon him to help us; and he will hear our voice if it please him. We know none other God, therefore we trust that he will not despise us; but if we be taken so, all Judea shall lie waste,

“ our Sanctuary shall be spoiled, and he will  
“ require the profanation thereof at our  
“ mouth. Hear me! I will do a thing with-  
“ in the days that ye have promised to de-  
“ liver the city to our enemies which shall  
“ go throughout all generations to the  
“ children of our nation, for the Lord will  
“ visit Israel by mine hand; but inquire  
“ not of mine act, for I will not declare it  
“ unto you till the things be finished that  
“ I do.”

Judith, after devoutly imploring the blessing of God on her undertaking, went, attended by her maid, to the camp of Holofernes, unto whom, by a well-feigned story, she readily gained admittance; and her behaviour and wisdom appeareth to have created admiration and respect throughout the camp.

Judith being invited by the General to an entertainment, at which, by drinking too freely, he fell into sleep, she took the advantage of his situation, and with his own falchion separated his head from his body, which she put into the bag that had contained her provision, and escaped with her maid in safety from the camp.

You must understand, my Children, that the glory of this action proceeded from the glorious cause for which it was done.—Judith did not enter the camp of Holofernes arrayed in her best attire, for the wicked purposes of a bold and shameless woman, nor did she, when committing the deed, know any of those dreadful horrors which the murderer or robber feeleth; but she went adorned with modesty, and armed with a firm trust in God, whose religion she had always obeyed, and in attempting the preservation of which she did not fear to die. Judith well knew the dangers to which she must be expos'd, but she equally knew the high duties of endeavouring to save her religion and her country, and that the Almighty was a strong tower of defence to all who performed their duty; she did not forget the weakness, the inability, of her sex, but she remembered that she was under the wing of her heavenly Father.

These duties, my Children, must be deeply engraven on your hearts. Should either your religion or country demand your assistance, you must yield it without reluc-

tance or delay. Judith's God is your God; his arm is not shortened that he cannot, neither is his love lessened that he will not, protect: Let this be ever in your thoughts, and then to whatever danger your duty may call, your courage will rise superior to it, knowing that the living God will be your strength.

The next morning, when the death of Holofernes was made known, the army, being seized with astonishment and terror, immediately raised the siege.

Judith received from the Bethulians every testimony of joy and approbation that hearts overflowing with gratitude could bestow, and from which she experienced the most exalted felicity, being silently assured by her conscience that those tributes were justly her due.

#### LESSON XL.

**Y**ou see in the history of Susannah, my Children, that never-failing care which the Almighty hath over all those who obey his will.

You are taught, in your Catechism, the duty of chastity, and a breach of this duty was the crime which Susannah was accused of ; but notwithstanding her accusers were great men, and she had no one to prove her innocence, yet her virtue was cleared by the Almighty, (whose eye, you know, is upon all our actions) and her false accusers brought to public shame.

Chastity is a duty equally praise-worthy in man as in woman ; but I more particularly speak to you Girls, because there are bad men who may endeavour to take the advantage of your ignorance and poverty to persuade you to commit a crime which, had you been placed in an higher station, they would not have dared to have proposed ; but the lower your situations are, the more your virtue will be noticed ; honest poverty will raise you friends amongst the good, but the wages of sin must cover you with shame.

I charge you, my dearest Girls ! to constantly keep in your minds that chastity is a duty required by your God, and a respect which you owe to your sex ; that a virtu-

ous woman is as a crown to her husband, and her value is far above gold.

I hope you all observed the decent behaviour of Susannah when her character was cleared : she did not revile her accusers, nor triumph in her own innocence; but no doubt she joined with her family in giving thanks to Heaven for her deliverance, and, like a child of God, forgave her enemies.

Remember, my dearest Children ! to be good Christians you must bear neither malice nor hatred in your hearts. There is not any person living who hath not sometimes cause to be offended ; but as they know it to be their duty, they will surely make haste to forgive ; and that we should all do so, our blessed Saviour hath taught us to petition our Father which is in heaven--to forgive *us* our trespasses, as *we* forgive *them* that trespass against *us*.

#### LESSON XLI.

**Y**ou must understand, my Children, that all those nations which did not serve the true and living God worshipped some false

one, and the name of the most famous which the Babylonians worshipped was Bel. The king, who highly regarded Daniel, exceedingly wished him to serve this idol, and demanded of him his reason for refusing to do so. Daniel answered, that his religion forbade him to worship any other god than the living One. Cyrus then informed him of the surprising quantity of provision which Bel daily consumed, and offered this as a proof that he must be a living god.--- Though people, my dear Children! who are not guilty of falsehood themselves may for a time be deceived by those who practise it, yet their reign cannot last long, for there are a thousand ways of discovering deceit that the deceiver himself never once thinks of: thus it happened to the priests of Bel, who thought themselves secure when they had deceived the king; but Daniel soon convinced them of their error, by shewing that the cunning of the wicked was easily overturned by the wisdom of the good.

## LESSON XLII.

**A**s the Babylonians, my Children, were destroyed by the Medes and Persians, so they, in process of time, were destroyed by Alexander, son of Philip King of Macedon, and whose empire (which was called the Grecian Empire) was after his death divided by four of his captains into four several kingdoms, and from the king of one of them, namely Syria, descended Antiochus Epiphanes, whose cruel treatment of the Jews, whom he had subjected to Syria, is related in the history of the Maccabees.

Antiochus being determined to root out the true religion, and establish idolatry, put many of those Jews who refused to comply to death; but Mattathias, who was very considerable in his city, he endeavoured to gain over by offers of exceeding honours and rewards, imagining that his example would greatly influence the people; but Mattathias rejected all his proposals, and declared that he and his family would continue to serve the living God.

Antiochus pursuing his persecution of the Jews, Mattathias, who was drawing near his end, exhorted his sons to zealously defend their religion, and forcibly described the glorious conduct of their forefathers, who, under various temptations and various persecutions, had preserved their fidelity to God untainted ; representing the mighty support and the blessed rewards received from that Power where all their reliance was fixed, and from whence alone rewards can flow. The righteous old man, after strongly recommending to his children a faithful observance of God's commands, and brotherly love to each other, gave them his blessing, and was gathered to his fathers.

I must here remark that Mattathias, by having instructed his children in their duty from their early days, had prepared their hearts to receive his advice, and to faithfully follow his directions, and by doing which they ascended in this world the highest point of glory, and secured eternal happiness in that which is to come.

The conduct and courage of Judas Mac-

cabeus were attended with the greatest success, but Joseph and Azarias, captains of the garrison, in the absence of Judas, vainly attempting what they were not equal to the performance of, occasioned a very great overthrow to the Jews.

There are but few, my Children, compared to the whole, who are really qualified for the conducting of business, it requiring a thorough knowledge of whatever is the undertaking, and which can only be obtained by application and experience; and yet almost every one who is willing to be taught may soon be made capable of following directions, and by continuing to diligently do so, may themselves in due time become able instructors, but of this they must not too hastily conclude, lest they should forsake the station they are suited to, (and wherein they may be both useful and regarded) before they are capable of discharging the duties of an higher, which will most assuredly draw on contempt, and in all probability end in their ruin.

Judas and his brethren were greatly renowned in the sight of Israel, and of all the

Heathen wheresoever their name was heard of; and their continuing to be victorious over such powerful foes, added to a mortal disease with which Antiochus was seized, struck him with a sense of his guilt, deeming both his malady and ill success punishments from God for his cruelties to the Jews, unto whom he vowed, should he mercifully spare him, to become a Jew himself, and declare unto all the inhabitants of the world the power of the living God.--These reflections of Antiochus did not prove a lesson to his successors, they also continuing to oppress the Jews, and Judas, by the cowardice of his army, who deserted upon seeing the enemy superior, was slain, and by which the Jews sustained a most grievous loss.

Jonathan, who was chosen to succeed his brother, gained many considerable victories; and so great was his fame, that it obtained him the favour of many kings, and from whom the Jews received much advantage; but at last, by the treachery of Tryphon, a false friend, he was slain.

Simon assembling the people, who were in great lamentation for Jonathan, exhort-

ed them to be of good courage, offering his life in defence of the nation and the Sanctuary; which they receiving with gladness of heart, promised obedience to all his commands; and under him, both as high priest, captain, and governor, they enjoyed that happiness and peace to which they had long been strangers; for every man sat under his vine and his fig-tree, and there was none to fray them.

Ptolemeus, captain of Jericho, having invited Simon and two of his sons to a banquet, most basely put them to death, treacherously attempting the life of John likewise; but by having been apprised of his design, John escaped his wicked intention.

Among the many horrid relations of the sufferers under Antiochus, I shall particularly, my Children, remind you of two,-- the seven brethren with their mother,--- and the righteous Eleazar, who, rather than bear the appearance of doing evil, which haply might mislead the young and inexperienced, voluntarily gave up that life which was in his power to preserve without really transgressing the law.

You must carefully understand that there is not any thing praise-worthy in throwing away life, but, on the contrary, it is exceedingly wicked, our life being intrusted to our care by the Almighty, unto whom we must equally account for having shortened as for having mispent it; but when it cannot be maintained without violating his sacred laws, or by appearing to violate them unto those whom our example may sway, it is then, like Eleazar, glorious to die, because we cannot with innocence live.

Dreadful as the tortures inflicted by Antiochus on the seven brethren appear, yet the support of the living God, for whom they so undauntedly met them, was greatly superior; armed with the breastplate of righteousness, they defied his utmost vengeance, and laughed to scorn that feeble power which could only deprive them of life, and that opened the door to everlasting happiness. The mother of these heroic youths, notwithstanding the horror of beholding her children mangled before her eyes, so far from sinking beneath her weight of misery, triumphed in the glorious sons

she had born, aiding their fortitude by shewing them her own, by considering their separation as a momentary parting, and in the full confidence of faith declaring she should meet them in heaven.

I must here, my Children, warn you against committing a fault which the vulgar are frequently guilty of:---they call it an high piece of fun to invite a Jew to partake of some pork, saying that nothing can make him so angry; this loudly proclaimeth their ignorance of the Bible, otherwise they would have known that the Almighty forbade swines' flesh to the Jews; and where the fun lieth in desiring a man to break a command of God's, and the man's obstinately refusing to comply, none but the vulgar can tell.---Sorry as a true Christian undoubtedly is that there should be any Jews in the world, and earnestly as he must wish for their conversion, yet while they unhappily remain in their error, depend upon it he never will insult them.

